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MARCHES OF THE DRAGOONS

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MARCHES OF THE DRAGOONS
IN THE
MISSISSIPPI VALLEY

AN ACCOUNT OF MARCHES AND ACTIVITIES
OF THE FIRST REGIMENT UNITED STATES
DRAGOONS IN THE MISSISSIPPI VALLEY
BETWEEN THE YEARS 1833 AND 1850

BY

LOUIS PELZER

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Many of the marches and other activities of the First Regiment of United States Dragoons between the years 1833 and 1850 were within the boundaries of the Iowa country. And so the early history of this military unit comes within the scope of the researches and publications of The State Historical Society of Iowa.

Since the later activities of the First Regiment between the years 1850 and 1861 were mainly in the region of the Far West, their history is not traced in this volume.

Benj. F. Shambaugh

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THREE regiments of dragoons have appeared upon the military rosters of the United States. The First Regiment of Dragoons — the subject of this volume — existed from March 2, 1833, to August 3, 1861. Until about 1850 this unit served largely in the Mississippi Valley in the work of frontier defense, garrison duty, treaty negotiations, marches, expeditions, patrol duty, exploration, and in the enforcement of federal laws.

These services influenced the westward drift of population, complementing the work of the explorers, the missionaries, the boatmen, the Indian traders, the surveyors, and the engineers. The annals of our western posts have not yet passed into such picturesque accounts as hover about Quebec, Ticonderoga, or Pitt. The names of great soldiers in the frontier army are few. Nor do military glory and renown follow the American soldiers over their western trails. But homage and recognition are due to the thousands of plain, frontier soldiers for their quiet unadorned and often unheralded services — whether at lonely Mississippi River posts, in the protection of trade caravans, in travels over the cacti-covered plains, or in marches from post to post.

A regimental history of the First United States Dragoons yields a cross sectional view of the work of the frontier army in the West. Such history has been preserved in officers' reports, the accounts of travellers, post records, diaries, journals, order books, and correspondence. This material, containing facts, descriptions, narratives, and impressions, enriches our knowledge of the staples of western history.

This volume of western military history is an outgrowth of the writer's *Henry Dodge*. Chapters IV and VI of the present volume are a recasting of chapters VIII and IX of that biography. Other chapters have been read at the spring meetings of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association at Nashville and at Chicago. The author believes that Captain Boone's *Journal* in the appendix is printed for the first time. In the case of the spelling of Indian names the author has attempted to follow that of the Bureau of American Ethnology. Acknowledgments are due to Dr. Benj. F. Shambaugh, the Editor, and to Dr. Dan E. Clark, the Associate Editor, of The State Historical Society of Iowa, for critically editing the manuscript. The index was compiled by Dr. John E. Briggs.

LOUIS PELZER

STATE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA
IOWA CITY IOWA

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I

SOLDIERS ON THE FRONTIER[1]

1829–1830

A SURVEY of the regular army of the United States in 1830 reveals a force of about six thousand men. The seven regiments of infantry and four of artillery encircled the inhabited portions of the United States in a line extending over six thousand miles. This army, composed of small units widely distributed and ever changing in its personnel, performed the military functions for a nation comprising 1,752,000 square miles of territory and containing a population of nearly thirteen millions.[2]

Fifty-six companies, aggregating 2555 men and stationed at sixteen establishments, comprised the western department of the army. By 1830 seven posts formed the line of defense on the middle western frontier — a frontier usually advancing before the westward drift of settlement and following the receding Indian population. In this irregular zone extending from Fort Snelling to Cantonment Gibson in Arkansas Territory were performed the varied and irregular functions of a frontier army.[3]

Each year an expensive system of recruiting was necessary to keep the numbers of this small army intact. In 1830 up to September 30th recruiting officers under the direction of Lieutenant Colonel J. H. Vose enlisted 1538 men at an expense of over $27,000. Of these New York City alone furnished 302, and ninety-six came from Boston. Such enlisted troops were subjected to a season of training and instruction and then found their ways over various routes into army posts to be absorbed into the general service.[4]

Desertions constituted a perpetual menace to the army. In 1830 such desertions numbered 1251, of whom 188 had escaped from their rendezvous or before joining their companies. The Adjutant General's figures indicated a steady increase of the evil since 1826, and he estimated the financial loss to the government from this evil at $102,087 for the year 1830. In eight years, he further estimated, the government had suffered a monetary loss of over half a million dollars.[5]

Much academic discussion of the causes and the remedies of this evil burdens the reports of army officers for 1830.[6] The payment of bounties in advance encouraged the enlistment of such vagrants who "enlist to-day and desert to-morrow". Others remained upon the rolls only long enough to receive four or five months' pay and the most costly part of a year's uniform and clothing.

A second cause of desertion was the inadequate system of punishments in the army which tended to degrade offenders rather than to produce penitence or reformation. General Gaines urged that certain forms of punishment corroded and destroyed the latent elements of moral feeling in a soldier. He severely condemned the following punishments then prevalent in the army: branding, marking with durable ink, and all such inflictions which tended to mutilate or cripple culprits; attaching a ball and chain or an iron collar on the leg or neck of the offender and compelling him to perform hard labor in public; shaving the head, putting a rope of straw around the neck of the offender, or requiring him to stand upon a barrel.

General Gaines recommended severe but guarded penalties for the five crimes of desertion, cowardice, mutiny, habitual drunkenness, and stealing. "I have seen," wrote this officer, "I think, hundreds of idle men who appeared better satisfied with a ball and chain attached to one of their legs, with the privilege of indulging in the filthy habits of drinking, and eating, and sleeping in a warm guard-house, without the trouble of cleaning themselves and their arms for honorable service, than when in the discharge of the regular duty of men under arms. But I have never seen one of those vicious idlers whipped without seeing some positive indication of the fact that the operation *intended* as a *punishment* was *felt as a punishment,* and by bad men only *feared* as a punishment. This means of punishing the most vicious will tend rather to invite good men into the service than to deter them, as without this kind of punishment the best of men are obliged to *watch* and labor whilst the worst of them *sleep* under guard."

Other causes ascribed for desertion were the too frequent changes in company commanders, the absence of officers from their units, the inadequate pay of the soldier, and the undue length of the term of enlistment for the common soldier.

But the greatest foe to the army in 1830 and a sure cause of desertion was the prevalence of intemperance among the soldiery. The government issued to its six thousand men in this year 72,537 gallons of whiskey at a cost of $22,132 or about one cent per gill.[7] Besides his daily ration of one gill of whiskey the soldier could sometimes obtain liquor from the army sutler or from the swarms of hucksters or whiskey-peddlers who hovered about almost all the army posts.

The testimony of army officers upon the evils of intemperance in the army was practically unanimous in 1830. Nearly every company had its habitual drunkards and these tended to corrupt the habits of their comrades. The proceedings of courts-martial proved that intoxication almost always preceded and usually caused the crime of desertion. In 1829, however, the Surgeon General had asserted that "a large portion of the sin of intemperance which is laid at the door of the army belongs in truth to the community from which it is taken."[8] In the same year a lieutenant expressed the belief that if the whiskey rations were abolished from the army the courts-martial would hear only one-third as many cases of desertion and that the number of lesser crimes would be reduced eighty per cent. "A soldier", he explained, "becomes intoxicated, and absents himself from roll-call; is confined, and after a night's lodging in the guard-house, tortured with thirst and all the nameless agonies which succeed a debauch, he is set at liberty, and perhaps 'detailed for duty.' He resorts to the bottle to free himself from what he justly calls the *horrors,* and is found 'drunk on duty.' He is again confined, tried, and perhaps sentenced to a forfeiture of pay; when, disheartened, vexed with himself and all around him, he flies again to the bottle for relief, and anticipating further punishment, *deserts.*"[9]

Measured by later standards the pay of the common soldier in 1830 seems low. Five dollars was the monthly wage; and this with the clothing, rations, and other allowances made the entire monthly amount about fifteen dollars. "The American soldier", wrote the Secretary of War, "is well paid, fed, and clothed; and, in the event of sickness or disability, ample provision is made for his support."[10]

But no provision existed for the moral culture of the hundreds of troops on and beyond the western military frontiers. There were no chaplains or religious agencies to minister to the moral and religious nature of the soldiers. The number of deaths reported from the military hospitals for the year ending June 30, 1831, was one hundred and twenty-six. Of these twenty-one died from consumption, twenty-two from intemperance, and eighty-three from other causes.[11] No ministers were present to give reproof and admonition during the life of these men, nor could the soldiers in death receive the consolations of religion.

Perhaps more picturesque but less serviceable were the soldiers' uniforms and clothing for the year 1830 than for the present time. A chance visitor at Fort Crawford, Fort Leavenworth, or Jefferson Barracks might have seen a most varied assortment of army clothing. But a quarter-master of to-day could find much of interest in the prices of soldiers' dress in 1830. Privates' drilling overalls cost $.62; the price of a pair of shoes was $1.24; the army blanket sold for $2.50; and the knapsacks cost $1.53; flannel drawers were priced at $.87; and a pair of laced bootees, $1.48. Great coats for service in the cold winter climates were purchased for $6.56. More ornamental articles, such as the pompon, band and tassel, and the cockade and eagle cost respectively twenty, twelve, and six cents.[12]

During the year ending September 30, 1830, the annual supply of arms and accoutrements was distributed among the soldiers at the various posts. In the list are reported 40,000 musket cartridges, 6500 flints, 742 gun-slings, 940 muskets, 882 cartridge-boxes, 107 swords, and over 900,000 pounds of lead. The ordnance department also reported the distribution of such articles as rocket paper, wipers, cannon balls, a siege mortar, rosin, bayonet belts, and nearly 15,000 pounds of powder.[13]

Soldiers at the western posts were compelled to endure much dreary monotony. Stationed hundreds of miles from home, often far removed from settlements and society, the troops frequently felt longings for a return to civil life. The public uninterested and uninformed in the distant garrison duties had little pride in the regular army of the United States. Newspapers quick to describe Indian wars or military duels saw little of interest in the work of the common soldier.

The manual labor performed by the soldiers provided some relief from the mechanics of months of garrison life. On the western frontier the soldiers aided in the construction of hundreds of miles of military roads running from one post to another. In nine months of the year 1830 the government paid out nearly $14,000 for soldiers' labor on surveys, opening roads, building barracks, and erecting quarters and storehouses.[14] The new building at Fort Crawford was completed in the summer of 1830 and in the same year a soldier workman with three companions spent ten months in building the stone powder magazine for this post.[15]

Disabled and discharged soldiers constituted a problem of charity in some western communities. At Jefferson Barracks such veterans found their way to St. Louis, as did many fur traders, lead miners, and adventurers stranded from the Mississippi River steamboats. Others lingered on the streets of St. Louis disabled by wounds or disease or driven to a premature old age by intemperance and debauchery. The city government in 1830 called the attention of Congress to such soldiers, who were without regular employment or industrious habits.

A memorial asking for the erection of a hospital in the city was sent to Congress. "These unfortunates", read the petition, "*cannot* be allowed to perish in our streets with sickness and want; and they *ought not* to be left to private charity."[16]

A long westward march executed in 1829 and reported to the United States Senate in 1830 stands as the most picturesque and perhaps the most important service rendered by the army during these two years.[17] This expedition of four companies of infantry commanded by Major Bennet Riley spent six months on the Santa Fé road. The purpose of the march was to furnish a military escort for a caravan composed of about seventy-nine men and thirty-eight wagons bound for the Mexican markets in Santa Fé.

This detachment of western soldiers accompanied by their wives and children embarked on a vessel at Jefferson Barracks early in May, 1829. "The deck", wrote a lieutenant, "was barricaded with beds and bedding; infants squalled, and chickens cackled". After a ten days' voyage the boat discharged its passengers at Cantonment Leavenworth — an unhealthful site recently abandoned by a company of infantry. Nearly three weeks were spent here in preparing the men for their adventures on the western plains.

Major Riley's infantry accompanied by twenty wagons laden with flour and by four ox-carts bearing camp equipage left the cantonment early in June, crossing hills, ravines, and prairies in bloom. The teamsters labored with the oxen; a cart broke down. On the way the command passed the house of the Delaware Indian sub-agent, "who, with ready joke and julep, did his best to make our long farewell to the settlements, a lively one." In a week Major Riley arrived at Council Grove and there greeted the assembled traders.

For about three weeks the soldiers and traders travelled over the Santa Fé road together — from Council Grove to Chouteau's Island on the Upper Arkansas River. The sameness of prairie landscape was relieved by such stations on the road as Diamond Spring, Cottonwood Creek, Turkey Creek, and Cow Creek. For about one hundred and thirty miles the route lay along the Arkansas River. From the high sandy hills the troops gazed upon great moving herds of buffalo which furnished sport and food for the command.

Chouteau's Island was the westernmost limit of Major Riley's escort duty. From here the traders, after receiving careful instructions from the major, resumed their march toward Santa Fé, which was about four hundred miles distant. A few hours later a horseman dashed into the major's camp bringing the news that the caravan had been attacked by a band of Indians and that a trader had been killed. Major Riley quickly broke camp and rejoined the traders with all speed. The Indians had escaped, but Major Riley continued to escort the traders many miles into Mexican territory. The suffering from heat and thirst grew intense, and on July 13th about thirteen yoke of oxen gave out. Three days later the escort returned to Chouteau's Island.

Nearly three months — from July 16 to October 13, 1829 — Major Riley's command remained near Chouteau's Island waiting for the caravan which was to return from Santa Fé to the States. Indian alarms and attacks were frequent, and one day Bugler Mathew King was killed by an Indian arrow. The camp was nearly always under arms. "I never failed for months", described an officer, "to sleep in pantaloons and moccasins, with pistols, and a loose woollen coat for a pillow; my sword stuck in the ground in the mouth of the tent, with my cap upon the hilt."

Hunting was a pleasure and a necessity; buffalo meat with a half ration of flour and salt was the daily fare. Terrified deer and antelopes sped away over the hot plains and the soldiers captured the swift hares in the rushes and tall grass. "I had a nearly tame one," wrote Lieutenant Cooke, "which fed on rushes, which would disappear in its mouth as if pushed through a hole." Now and then they would pass through prairie dog villages and frighten badgers and foxes or a drove of horses which dashed away from the caravan. "Buffalo, wolves, rattlesnakes, and grasshoppers, seemed to fill up the country", observed Lieutenant Cooke.

During the warm summer days the troops near Chouteau's Island fished, hunted, and made hundreds of buffalo powder-horns. The more skilled troopers carved out of the buffalo horns such articles as spoons, combs, cups, buttons, and "wine-*glasses*". Then the transportation vehicles were put in order; but five wagons and three carts were condemned. Shortly thereafter Major Riley ordered the wagons to be stocked with fifteen days' rations of pork, salt, beans, vinegar, soap, candles, and a quantity of meat, flour, and bread.

Not until October 12, 1829, did the Mexican caravan of creoles, Spaniards, Indians, and Frenchmen arrive at Chouteau's Island. Major Riley estimated the value of the traders' goods and their two thousand horses, mules, and jacks at about $200,000. Military courtesies were exchanged and a feast was given in honor of the Mexican officials. "Seated cross-legged around a green blanket in the bottom of the tent; we partook of bread, buffalo meat, and, as an extraordinary rarity, some salt pork; but to crown all, were several large raw onions, for which we were indebted to the arrival of our guests; a tin cup of whiskey, which, like the pork, had been reserved for an unusual occasion, was passed around, *followed* by another of water."

Twenty-five days of marching lay before Major Riley's companies when they began their homeward march to the Missouri River. Adjutant J. F. Izard superintended the work of grazing the herds of stock and of guarding against stampedes. The soldiers again saw immense herds of buffalo. Seventy mules overcome by cold and fatigue were left on the prairies. It was November 8th when Major Riley's troops, abounding in good health and spirits, returned to their dingy huts and sheds at Cantonment Leavenworth.

Thus year after year the soldier in the West drilled, marched, executed Federal laws, and shifted from post to post. When his term of enlistment expired or when he became disabled younger and rawer recruits replaced him. The common soldier witnessed the West letting in the population, the establishment of other military posts, and the retreat or removal of the Indian tribes. Some of the soldiers bore a part in quieting the Winnebago alarm of 1827 and others participated in the Black Hawk War of 1832.[18] The United States Rangers, organized in the same year, ranged the western frontier. The veterans of this regiment brought training and valuable experience to its successor — the First Regiment of United States Dragoons.

II

ON THE WAY TO JEFFERSON BARRACKS

While praising highly the services of the rangers, Secretary Cass urged that they now be converted into a regiment of dragoons. This would be less expensive by $153,932; frequent reënlistments and reorganization of the rangers meant loss of time, experience, and efficiency; the dragoons would be equal in celerity of movements; the elements of cavalry tactics would be preserved and strengthened; and finally, horsemen would be indispensable at the many scattered frontier garrisons in overtaking and chastising the marauding Indian bands of the far western plains.[19]

A bill "for the more perfect defense of the frontier" was signed by President Jackson on March 2, 1833.[20] The regiment to consist of ten companies of seventy-one men each was to be commanded by a colonel. All were to be subject to service either on horse or foot and in every respect were to be governed by all the rules and articles of war which regulated the peace establishment.

Eighteen dragoon officers were commissioned two days later.[21] Henry Dodge, already distinguished in Indian wars, was to be the colonel of the regiment, while Stephen Watts Kearny, a veteran of the battle of Queenstown Heights, was made lieutenant colonel. Captain Edwin Vose Sumner and Lieutenant Philip St. George Cooke later became veterans of two wars. And Lieutenant Jefferson Davis, who had graduated from West Point five years before, was, thirty years later, to become President of the Confederate States.

Enlistments for the regiment were made during the summer months of 1833. To avoid sectional feelings recruits were secured in nearly every State of the Union. Hundreds of young men weary of cities and society joined the troops which were to "scour the prairies of the region beyond the waters of the Mississippi." Company E under Captain David Perkins was recruited from the young men of New York City.[22]

Early in August, 1833, Lieutenant John H. K. Burgwin's troop, enlisted at Sackett's Harbor, New York, commenced its long journey to Jefferson Barracks, the headquarters for the regiment. In a stormy lake voyage they were tossed from Buffalo to Erie. In Ohio the smoky, dismal towns of Warren, Wellsville, and Steubenville marked their progress. From Wheeling the course over the Cumberland Road led them past Zanesville, Columbus, and Springfield. From Cincinnati a steamer bore them to Louisville where Lieutenant Colonel Kearny appeared and related that Captain Sumner's dragoons, likewise from New York, had embarked on the steamer "Helen Mar" only about a week before. A lazy voyage along the Indiana shore finally brought them to the Illinois banks to find the "Helen Mar" grounded on a sand bar. Lieutenant Burgwin now transferred himself to the belated vessel, and after two days she was again afloat. Rounding the point at the mouth of the Ohio, the "Helen Mar" steamed against the powerful current of the Mississippi and in two days landed its dragoons at Jefferson Barracks.[23]

Lieutenant Cooke's recruiting services took him early in the summer of 1833 to western Tennessee. There the villages of Columbia, Dover, Clarksville, and the squalid hamlet of Reynoldsburgh were visited. The town of Perryville furnished "some hardy recruits, whose imagination inflamed them with the thoughts of scouring the far prairies on fine horses, amid buffalo and strange Indians". At Jackson he observed the election of Davy Crockett to Congress. Leaving Nashville, Cooke's company of dragoons floated down the Cumberland River in a lazy keel-boat. At Paducah the force was transferred to a steamboat, and soon the young Tennesseeans were mingling with the troops at the barracks.[24]

In the fall of 1833 a corps of about thirty dragoons who had been enrolled in the eastern States was travelling to Detroit over Lake Huron and across Green Bay.[25] Moving up the Fox River and across the portage, the troops descended the Wisconsin River where, perhaps, a few recalled that Father Marquette and Louis Joliet had followed the same trail more than a century and a half before.

But instead of rejoicing over the life and verdure of June the dragoons were noting the somber and sullen approach of winter.

Fort Crawford was visited; but a river voyage of about six hundred miles still lay ahead of the dragoons, and the increasing cold roused fears that ice would soon close the navigation of the Mississippi River. On November 17, 1833, the two barges bearing the soldiers began their journey toward St. Louis. With keen regrets, it may be imagined, the young lieutenant and his men took leave of the hospitable mess of Colonel Taylor and the warm-hearted comradeship at Fort Crawford.[26]

Six oars, sometimes aided by powerful square sails and always by the steady current, urged each barge forward. Soon the bustling scenes of the Galena lead mines were reached and left behind by the boats. They glided past innumerable islands, marshes, thick forests, and sandbars whitened by flocks of swans. But the silence and the solitude of those days have long since disappeared in the sights and sounds of the cities, towns, and hamlets of four States.

At night landings were made on the bank or on an island. A number of men then felled trees; others built the fires; the seven tents were raised; and in about an hour's time the cook announced supper. The blazing logs, the lounging troopers, the cheerful mess, and the huge sycamores silhouetted against the sky made a picturesque scene. "The men were a merry set," wrote a passenger on one of the barges, "looking forward to the future possession of their horses, arms, and regimentals with considerable self-complacency; and many a song then echoed through the hoar forests for the first time; some of the most approved, such as '*The hunters of Kentucky*' or '*O 'tis my delight in a stormy night in the season of the year,*' became from their frequent repetition almost a nuisance."

A day was spent at Fort Armstrong[27] where some of the men enjoyed the warm hospitality of its commander and his wife. A swift passage over the Des Moines Rapids hurried on the barges. Four days after leaving Fort Armstrong a calm night and a full moon permitted a nocturnal cruise of fifty miles. This brought them within about twenty miles of St. Louis. It was just nine days since leaving Fort Crawford that the young lieutenant and his men presented themselves at the post of Jefferson Barracks.

To the travel-worn recruits the sight of the barracks was no doubt a welcome relief after their long journey. Romantically situated ten miles below St. Louis, on a bold bluff overlooking the Mississippi, the stone buildings formed a hollow quadrangle, one side of which opened upon the terrace bordering the river. From here the young dragoons observed the steady current of the Mississippi and, beyond, the pale cliffs and extensive woodlands of the Illinois shore. It is not unlikely that General Henry Atkinson had discovered here artistic as well as strategic features when he erected the post in 1826.[28]

Outside the parallelogram the dragoons noted the commissary's house, the magazines, and the extensive but unfinished stables. In the rear of the garrison rose a grove of forest oaks whose broad-spreading branches shaded a neat burial ground. "The number of its white wooden slabs", described Flagg in 1836, "gave melancholy evidence of the ravages of the cholera among that corps of fine fellows which, four years before, garrisoned the Barracks." On the southern outskirts of the barracks lay another burial ground which contained the tombs of officers whose last services had been performed at this post.[29]

Such was the station which had been chosen to contain the reserve forces for the southern, western, and northern frontiers. "From its central position and its proximity to the mouths of the great rivers leading into the interior, detachments, by means of steam transports, may be thrown with great rapidity and nearly equal facility into the garrisons upon the Upper Mississippi, the Missouri, the Arkansas, Red, or Sabine Rivers." Brigadier General Henry Atkinson had been the commander here in 1832 when the Sixth Infantry of about two hundred and fifty-three men was enabled to reinforce the army in the Black Hawk War.[30]

Disappointment, however, was the lot of the dragoons whose long journey had left their clothing ragged and threadbare. Having been assured by recruiting officers that their military clothing would be in readiness at the barracks, the young soldiers had left all surplus garments behind. Month after month passed but no forage caps were issued and no jackets or overalls had replaced the tattered garments of the sergeants, privates, or musicians. October and November came but no woollen overalls or great coats for any winter campaigns.[31]

The unfinished stables were another source of annoyance: day after day during the summer months troops were equipped with saws, hammers, pickaxes, shovels, and other implements and then set to work at building the stables. Captains sent their men across the Mississippi to cut down timber and to tow it to the other side — and all without any compensation. Murmurings and whisperings of fraud and corruption passed current among the soldiery. "This regiment", complained one dragoon, "was not enlisted to build stables, and some of our men have signified their disrelish of the work by *not remaining to see it finished.*"[32]

Dragoon cartridge-boxes, holsters, sabre belts, and arms likewise had not yet appeared at the post. Old muskets were disinterred from the arsenal where they had reposed since the last war with Great Britain. These condemned pieces could be shouldered for the various movements on the drill grounds, but in skirmishing could neither be aimed nor fired. "Permit Me", wrote Colonel Dodge late in August, 1833,[33] "to Call the attention of the Genl in Chief to the absolute Necessity of ordering the Cloathing and Arms intended for the use of the U S Dragoons[.] there are four Companies at this port

[post] and Capt Sumner is daily expected with an additional Company[.] the recruits are all here Much in Want of Cloathing and it is important We should have our Arms[.] it is important that the Dragoons should be drilled at Target Shooting as well as to fire with precission on Horseback[.] the season is fast advancing[.]"

It is little wonder that desertions were of almost nightly occurrence. Barrack rooms were without bunks; and even some of the kitchen implements had been purchased with the soldiers' money. Months of monotonous maneuvers had been endured; sentinels had wearied of lonely midnight guard duty; officers were sometimes arrogant; and not unlikely homesickness had raised longings for the sights and sounds of New York City or for the quiet and companionship of New England homes.

Privates, sergeants, and corporals wearying of such routine and hardships had deserted. "Oppression every day growing more and insupportable," declared one soldier, "the dragoons began openly to murmur, and the guard-house was kept continually filled to overflowing. Courts-martial were in continual session; and for the most trifling neglect of duty, men were tried and sentenced either to walk the tow-path all day with a bag of shot on their shoulders, or to confinement in the guard-room." In one case a whole battalion was drawn up to witness the punishment of a deserter. Fifty successive lashes with a cat-o'-nine-tails were laid upon the victim's bare back. Salt and water were roughly applied to the bloody wounds and the victim was then consigned to the dreary walls of the guardhouse.[34]

One company after another of fine-appearing men had reached the fort during the summer and fall of 1833. An observer of that year wrote:[35] "The recruits for the service of the newly-raised regiment of dragoons organizing for the future service of the frontier, ... were distinguished from the rag-tag-and-bob-tail herd drafted into the ranks of the regular army, by being for the most part picked, athletic young men of decent character and breeding. They were all Americans, whereas the ordinary recruits consist either of the scum of the population of the older States, or of the worthless German, English, or Irish emigrants."

In the first drill, however, the raw and undisciplined troops resembled not a little the army of Jack Falstaff. The rawest dragoons furnished a ludicrous sight to the older men who had already learned the commands of "attention", "halt", "column forward", and "guard right". Sergeant Roberts was the only man who knew how to put his left foot foremost. In spite of long extra duty in the awkward squad Private Cooke never learned how to put his left foot foremost and, suddenly taking "leg-bail", he deserted his regiment.

"Col. Dodge", described one trooper, "is in command of the regiment, a man about say fifty, thick set, somewhat gray, a thorough backwoodsman, very fond of talking over his own exploits; he was, I believe, a militia general, and obtained the colonelcy of this regiment on account of his late exertions during the Black Hawk war on the whole a clever man, but not much of soldier.''[36]

Early in October the dragoon horses arrived — a collection of blacks, creams, greys, sorrels, and bays. Weeks and weeks of almost continual drills rendered them quite familiar with military movements. On November 9, 1833, the first battalion parade under the command of Major Richard B. Mason was held on a beautiful spot about a hundred yards to the rear of the barracks. The next day the inspector general appeared, and, followed by his staff, marched through the ranks and pronounced men, horses, and equipment in excellent order.[37]

III

IN WINTER QUARTERS AT CAMP JACKSON

For some weeks camp stories and rumors of prospective marches had been afloat among the soldiery. Late in November of 1833 the order to march five companies to Fort Gibson gave cheer and buoyancy to the drill-worn recruits. On the 20th of that month the companies formed on the parade ground, the baggage-wagons were loaded, the bugle sounded, and Colonel Dodge gave the order to march. "The prisoners," wrote a trooper, "consisting of eighteen men under sentence for desertion, and other capital offences, were made to walk hand-cuffed and chained, some with a cannon ball to the leg, flanked on either side by the rearguard. And thus commenced the Regiment of Dragoons their first march."[38]

Only three or four miles were made on the first day's march, which ended at Camp Burbees. Here the underbrush was cleared away. The white canvas tents of each company were formed in two rows and the horses were picketed in the intervening space. The animals were then fed and curried. A large heap of logs soon yielded a fire which crackled and cast a glare over the encampment. Then came the evening meal, tattoo, and the posting of the sentinels. The blazing embers of the open fire died down as the fatigue and excitement of the day gave way to sleep.

Early reveille summoned the troops to the second day's march of twenty miles. On the third day the little army advanced twenty-three miles through picturesque scenes: "mountains and valleys so richly thrown together; forests and prairies so beautifully interspersed; the elm and sycamore towered high in the air; the ledges of broken rocks emitted forth their tiny torrents, which gently meandered on their course through the tangled foliage."[39]

Sunday, the 25th of November, 1833, was spent in marching seventeen miles. The falling snow and the increasing cold now induced the command to halt in the middle of the afternoon. Now and then a fat buck would be captured for the evening mess; but the scarcity of fodder made it necessary to reduce the daily ration for the horses to ten ears of corn. On the 8th of December the soldiers came upon the silent ruins of an old town of the Delawares. Small log-built huts were decayed and moss-grown; but giant oak trees still preserved the vividly carved history of the tribe's bloody wars — a record which made the quiet and desolation of the once powerful village all the more impressive.

A few days later a luckless trooper lost his carbine, for which he was compelled to lead his horse twenty-three miles over a rough course as punishment. The boundary line between Arkansas Territory and Missouri was crossed, and the little town of

Fayetteville next noted the passage of the regiment. Soon heavy forests of oak, elm, and pecan were left behind, and the marches then averaged twenty-five miles per day. On December 15th Illinois Creek was forded and that night the dragoons camped upon its banks.

Fort Gibson having been passed on the afternoon of December 17, 1833, a temporary encampment named Camp Sandy was made nearby upon a sandbar which projected half-way across the Grand River. Here the fatigued and half-starved men pitched their tents; a few of them set out to visit the soldiers of the Seventh Infantry then stationed at Fort Gibson and commanded by Colonel Matthew Arbuckle.[40] At the fort a warm-hearted, cordial reception was given the dragoons, and question after question by the infantrymen long isolated from the rest of the world elicited news concerning the scenes and associations of earlier and happier days.

The dragoon horses had arrived in good condition but were soon suffering from want of provender. Colonel Dodge immediately upon his arrival at Fort Gibson called upon Colonel Arbuckle and was informed that eight thousand bushels of corn for the horses had been contracted for. But the bitterly cold weather of early January caused six inches of ice to freeze on the Grand River. Navigation was stopped and it became impossible to deliver the corn at the fort. The leaves and tender stems of cane were then used for feed, and twice a day the soldiers might have been seen emerging from the brake with huge bundles. Next the animals were turned loose in the brake, but a stampede resulted and the horses scattered to various sections of the country. An officer and a party of men were therefore sent after the strayed animals, and after considerable difficulty brought them back to camp.[41] Early in February, 1834, Captain Sumner was ordered to proceed to Washington County in Arkansas Territory to attempt to secure forage and a quantity of corn not to exceed five thousand bushels.

"The Month of Jany", wrote Dodge in February, "has been unusually inclement[.] the freezing weather Killing the Cane was unknown in this Country heretofore[.] the Severity of the weather injured the on the [*sic*] Dragoon Horses[.] the favorable change in the winter and a Supply of Corn having arrived the public Horses are Now recruiting fast and will be in good order in one Month from this time[.]"[42] A steamboat bearing a quantity of clothing for the dragoons became stranded about twenty miles below the fort because of the low water of the Arkansas River.

"The Arms I drew from the Arsenal", urged Colonel Dodge, "is of the Most indifferent Kind and I have No Supply of Ammunition to enable Me to practice the Men to target firing[.] it is a matter of the first importance to Make Men Servicable that they should be good Marksmen[.] on relieving the Guards I have directed the Men to fire at a target fifty paces and I have discovered the greater part of them Know Nothing about the use of Arms[.]"[43]

Camp Jackson,[44] laid out in a little bit of woods one and a quarter miles from Fort Gibson, became the permanent winter quarters for the regiment. Large barracks of oak shingles quartered the troops but afforded poor protection from the cold. The roofs were leaky, but buffalo robes kept the water from the saddles, knapsacks, and clothing, and preserved a dry sleeping place for the night. At times rain came down the wide chimneys, perhaps besprinkling the rusty pork and the flour, or dripping into the camp-kettles and diluting the bean-soup.

The long winter evenings were spent in various amusements. Sergeant S——, six feet six inches in height, was generally master of ceremonies at the dances in which dragoons, infantrymen, Osages, Creeks, and Seminoles sometimes joined. Music, no more tuneful perhaps than the dances were graceful, came from two or three cracked fiddles played by the Tennessee boys. Guttural sounds from the Indians, the strains from a banjo or clarinet, and loud blasts by the bugler sometimes added to the hilarity and merriment of these festive evenings.

In some snug corner somewhat removed from these sounds and seated around a tallow candle might have been seen a card party. And perhaps another dragoon could be seen reading *Robinson Crusoe* or the life of General Marion — books which constituted a considerable portion of the regimental library. But tattoo sounded and ended all too soon such amusements enjoyed at Camp Jackson more than eighty years ago.

At the same time there is revealed the unpleasant side of the soldier's life. Desertions, arrests, and courts-martial were only too frequent in an army that was then chafing under much popular criticism. Jealousy and intrigue add other shadows to the picture. "I find more treachery and deception practiced in the army", Colonel Dodge wrote in confidence to a friend, "than I ever expected to find with a Body of Men who Call themselves Gentlemen[.] My Situation is unpleasant [Jefferson] *Davis* who I appointed my adjt was among the first to take a stand against me Major Mason and Davis are now two of my most inveterate enemies[.] the desire of these Gentlemen appears to be to Harass me in Small Matters[.] they dont want to fight if Mason would say fight I would go to the field with him with Great pleasure and indeed unless Harmony and good feeling exists in a Corps the public Service cannot be promoted and to undertake an Expedition with such men I should run the risk of Losing what Little reputation I have acquired".[45]

Reveille at sunrise, the doctor's call at half past seven, breakfast at eight, guard-mounting at nine, horse and foot tactics, target shooting, and tattoo at nine in the evening constituted the daily routine in the winter of 1834.[46] On March 17th William Bradford, a second lieutenant, accidentally killed himself with his pistol. Two days later the entire regiment was mustered and the body, wrapped in the national flag, was borne to the cemetery at Fort Gibson. "He was a Young officer of great promise", reported his colonel later. "His premature death is lamented by all who are acquainted with him". With arms reversed the dragoons listened to a prayer by an aged minister; the body was then lowered, and three volleys of musketry were fired over the silent grave.[47]

In the winter of 1834 the troops were awaiting orders to proceed through the extensive Indian country between the western boundaries of Missouri and Arkansas Territory and the Rocky Mountains. On February 15th Colonel Dodge presented his views on the prospective march to Adjutant General R. Jones.[48] The dragoons should be unincumbered by the infantry; all necessary supplies should be transported by mules; and guides, interpreters, and hunters should accompany the troops. "Twenty Osages should be procured to accompany the expedition as Buffalo Hunters to enable Me to Subsist My Command untill the Dragoons Learn to shoot Buffalos[.] their are few Men in the Command that ever saw a Buffaloo and would be entirely unable to Subsist themselves By Hunting[.] the greatest difficulty attending a March through the indian country will be in Subsisting My Command on the Buffaloes".

Brigadier General Henry Leavenworth, who had assumed command of the left wing of the western department of the army, arrived at Camp Jackson in the spring of 1834. The plain-looking old soldier was a welcome arrival at the lonely barracks: his affable yet dignified manner made him a popular soldier among his brother officers. His order of April 23rd gave directions for a review and inspection of the regiment of dragoons and of the seventh infantry to be held on the drill ground at Fort Gibson on April 30th.[49]

For years the overland traders from Franklin, Missouri, to Santa Fé had been making demands for military protection for their caravans. Colonel Dodge was directed to send an intelligent and efficient officer to Missouri to learn what kind of escort might be needed, and Lieutenant Burgwin was dispatched upon this duty. Early in May it appears that Captain Wharton with a company of about sixty dragoons was ordered by Dodge to meet the traders and to accompany them to the Mexican city of Santa Fé.[50]

The "utmost harmony", continued the order, was to be maintained between the traders and the troops. The command was warned to guard against surprises, and "should Capt Wharton Meet the Hostile Indians in Battle He will Charge them if possible to do so as the Best possible plan of defeating them".

Meanwhile five additional companies — F, G, H, I, and K — had been assembled at Jefferson Barracks, and during the months of May and June, 1834, were marching to Fort Gibson. The route traversed was approximately that pursued by the other companies in the previous November and December. A dragoon has left in a journal[51] a brief but interesting record of this movement of four hundred and fifty-three miles.

In an uneventful march during the first eight days the company advanced one hundred and fifty-six miles. On May 19th, the troops encamped on a small stream where they found good water and grass for the jaded horses and mules. Here one of the men was placed in confinement for disobedience to orders. Two days later the companies entered a broken country and an encampment was made on the Osage fork of the Gasconade River where they found fish and wild game in abundance.[52]

On May 24th they advanced for twenty-one miles over a fine, well watered country. "We passed", describes the journal of Company I, "a Village called Springfield with 15 or 20 log Cabbins & to all appearance the inhabitants are idle & lazy depending upon their negroes for support which is the custom in all slavestates. I observed no less than 4 or 5 grog shops in fact all men in the country sell Whiskey & other things to us soldiers at a most exorbitant price — For instance 25 cts a pt for Whisky 12½ cts a qt for milk &c".

Fifteen miles were made on May 26th over a ground saturated with rain, and on that evening the company rested at Camp Cass — evidently near the present town of Cassville, Missouri. The men were now reduced to half rations of meat and were looking in vain for elk and other kinds of game. Mumps had attacked some of the men and others were feeling the effects of eating poor food and sleeping on the damp ground. Mules and pack horses were in good condition, but no corn could be secured for them. "This country", concludes the journal, "is remarkable for insects such as snakes, Ticks, & Cattipillars."

In the next two days the command rode forty-eight miles, but five of the dragoons who were so unfortunate as to become sick were left behind. On the following day a forced march of thirty-four miles brought them within seventy miles of the fort. Men and horses were improving daily and the spirits of the troopers became more buoyant as they neared their journey's end. "It is now past 11", runs the drowsy scribble for this day, "& we have to rise before 3 therefore I must take to my blanketts for repose trusting the fatigues of the days march will render sleep inviting".

After pushing forward twenty-eight miles on May 30th the company halted to make preparations for inspection at the fort. Lieutenant Colonel Kearny joined in the march the following day, but the excessive heat of Sunday, June 1st, induced the troops to remain encamped. The remaining ten miles were ridden on Monday when they arrived at Camp Jackson. The Bostonians of Company F and the Hoosiers of Company G had arrived a few weeks before.

Eager to begin the summer's campaign the officers increased their efforts to prepare men and horses for the far western tour. Sergeant S—— daily instructed a class of officers in swordsmanship, which they in turn attempted to impart to the men. "Our camp is now," describes one dragoon, "throughout the day, a constant scene of bustle and noise, the blacksmith shops are kept in continual operation, tailors and saddlers find constant employment, and in fact no one has time to be idle; one half the regiment are daily detailed to watch horses whilst grazing upon the prairies, which is now the most severe duty to be performed, standing during the whole of the day exposed to the heat of a broiling sun, which during the last week has raised the mercury to from 103° to 107° in the thermometer."[53]

The regiment of dragoons, as well as the seventh regiment of infantry, was reviewed by General Leavenworth on June 10th, and to the thousands of Indians and other spectators the review was an interesting and novel scene. The troops dressed in fatigue uniform and drawn up in battle array performed the maneuvers of battle, of charge, and of repulse, as well as other feats of horsemanship.[54] The later farewells and good wishes from the infantrymen to the dragoons can be imagined; but neither then knew that a large number of the young soldiers would never return from the arid western plains.

IV

THE EXPEDITION TO THE PAWNEE PICT VILLAGE[55]

"The act for the better defense of the frontiers by raising a regiment of dragoons is in process of execution", Secretary Cass had written late in 1833. Somewhere on the Red River, about two hundred and fifty miles to the west of Fort Gibson, lay the Pawnee Pict and Camanche villages. Between the Missouri and Arkansas frontiers and the Rocky Mountains, but beyond the reach of infantry forces, roamed the restless Pawnees and Camanches.

These tribes had not yet recognized the United States in any treaties. Without stationary residences, but with a supply of horses, these wild plainsmen could be held in check only by a similar force occasionally displayed among them. Policy and humanity urged such a course, and Secretary Cass believed that the first United States Dragoons would impress upon these Indians the power of the United States, and excite a deeper respect for the government. "It will do honor to the army", he said, "and render effectual service to the country."[56]

When Colonel Dodge on June 15, 1834, gave his order of "Forward, march!" nine companies of about five hundred men responded and began their summer campaign. It was an imposing cavalcade: the tramp of the horses on the prairie mingled with the commands of the officers; the proud and manly deportment of the young men indicated the buoyant hope and spirit of the army; a company of white horses made a striking contrast to another one of blacks; while sorrels and bays gave added effects of color. To the rear of the companies might have been seen and heard the lumbering movements of the baggage-wagons.

Four bands of Indians — Senecas, Osages, Cherokees, and Delawares — joined the expedition to serve as hunters, guides, and interpreters. Two young girls, a Kiowa of about fifteen years and a Pawnee of about eighteen years, were taken with the dragoons to be restored to their tribes. This policy it was believed would pave the way for friendly intercourse.[57] George Catlin, the famous portrait painter of Indians, had been given permission by the Secretary of War to accompany the expedition in its visit to the wild tribes along the Arkansas and the Red rivers. "I start this morning with the dragoons for the Pawnee country", he wrote on June 19th, "but God only knows where that is."[58]

Long forced marches were made during the warm sultry June days. Springs and streams provided a bountiful supply of water and the prairies furnished pasturage for the dragoon horses. On the 26th of June they passed a band of five or six hundred Osages under the command of "Black Dog", a famous warrior of that nation. On the next day a herd of buffalo was met and General Leavenworth and Colonel Dodge tested the mettle and speed of their horses. Signs of the Pawnees became more abundant. On July 1st forty-five men and three officers were reported sick from the excessive heat, and each day the command pushed on with depleted ranks.

On July 4th the dragoons were ferried across the Washita River. "Our baggage", relates a dragoon of Captain Browne's company, "we transported by means of a raft constructed by canoes lashed together and covered with planks. We also used a canvass Boat covered with gum Elastick belonging to Col Kearney which we found to answer an excellent purpose. Having encamped on the opposite side with our whole force & concluding it best to travel with as little encumbrance as possible, Col Dodge selected about 250 men & horses most able for duty & taking only 10 days provisions for 20 days sustinence, set forward on a forced march."[59]

About one hundred and eighty miles had now been marched by the dragoons, when early in July a reorganization of the regiment became necessary. Six companies of forty-two men each were to continue the campaign with Colonel Dodge in command. One hundred and nine were left for duty at Camp Leavenworth, together with eighty-six sick men. Baggage-wagons were abandoned; each man was furnished with ten days' rations and eighty rounds of cartridges; and the march once more began.

Day after day through the month of July the command continued its march over the rolling prairies. Now and then a stray band of Indians would be observed. Wild horses in large herds passed; and enormous herds of buffalo moved across the plains. Men and beasts were prostrated by heat and the strenuous campaign, while the low state of the provisions brought anxiety to Colonel Dodge. On July 14th a roving band of about forty Camanches entered the camp to beg tobacco and to talk with the dragoon colonel. From these Indians Colonel Dodge learned that the Camanches, Kiowas, and the Pawnee Picts (or Toyash) were friends and to some degree allies. "The Camanches are, we learn," runs the journal of this expedition, "the largest band, the proudest and boldest; therefore the colonel has resolved to visit them first; thence to the Toyash village, establish friendly understandings with one or both, or war with one or both, as may be; officers and men on the alert, as if in the atmosphere of war."[60]

Colonel Dodge now pushed on and soon arrived at a Camanche camp of about two hundred skin lodges. About a hundred mounted Camanches, seemingly not a little alarmed, came to welcome the dragoons. Thousands of horses were grazing about the Indian camp, and several of the officers purchased animals for a blanket or a butcher knife. Colonel Dodge waited for the Camanche chief, then absent on a hunting trip; but after more than a day's fruitless waiting the regiment moved on in the direction of the Toyash village. An Indian who had been at the Toyash camp promised Colonel Dodge to guide him thither.

By July 19th the command had been reduced to one hundred and eighty-three men. Seventy-five, over one-half of whom were sick, had been left behind. Desertions had also reduced the band. For a month the soldiers had been without a morsel of bread, and their appetites had become too voracious to distinguish between horse flesh and buffalo meat. The mirage of a waterfall glistening in the sunlight was discovered to be a mass of salt. "No buffalo", records Lieutenant Wheelock's journal. "Our unshod horses suffered very much to-day; wild horses in abundance, and bears; many deer were seen; a few were killed; scanty allowance of provisions for our men; we march too fast to be able to hunt much on the road; game is now divided among the command with great care; marched in three columns; baggage reduced to three pack horses to each company."

Across reddish granite hills, deep ravines, and difficult passes Colonel Dodge continued the toilsome and intricate route. On July 20, 1834, they were within five miles of the Toyash village situated on a branch of the Red River. The non-appearance of the band convinced the dragoons that the Indians had either fled or that they had determined to make a stand and fight. Bayonets were fixed and every preparation for a conflict was made. On the next day the command proceeded a mile when they were met by about sixty Indians, who seemed greatly alarmed and begged Colonel Dodge not to fire upon them. After several miles of marching along extensive and well cultivated fields of squashes, pumpkins, beans, melons, and corn, the dragoons reached the village.

Here then was the Toyash or Pawnee Pict village, the main goal of this expedition; and the object which had been the stimulus during five long weeks of marching. The village, consisting of about two hundred grass lodges, was situated in a rich bottom embedded in the immense ledges of rocks and mountains. Colonel Dodge encamped in a fine position about a mile from the village, and the hungry dragoons were soon enjoying the Indian hospitalities. Dishes of corn and beans dressed with buffalo fat were placed before them. For dessert the soldiers enjoyed liberal supplies of watermelons and wild plums; while the savages gladly exchanged green corn, dried horse meat, and buffalo meat for vermillion, articles of clothing, knives, and tobacco.[61]

According to the previous arrangements of Colonel Dodge a grand council was held between the American officers and the chiefs and warriors of the Toyash nation. Bands of Camanches mounted upon their fleet horses had arrived; Pawnee Picts and Wecos were present in large numbers; while the tall, erect, and dignified forms of the Kiowas represented the higher type of the Indians. It was a scene that well stimulated the pen and the brush of George Catlin.

"We are the first American officers who have ever come to see the Pawnees", began Colonel Dodge at the first council on July 22nd. "We meet you as friends, not as enemies, to make peace with you, to shake hands with you. The great American captain is at peace with all the white men in the world; he wishes to be at peace with all the red men of the world; we have been sent here to view this country, and to invite you to go to Washington, where the great American chief lives, to make a treaty with him, that you may learn how he wishes to send among you traders, who will bring you guns and blankets, and everything that you want."

Colonel Dodge then referred to the murder of Judge Martin, which some Indians had committed on the False Washita earlier in the summer. The Colonel informed them also that he had learned from the Camanches that the little son of Judge Martin was being held as a prisoner. "Give us the white boy, and we will give you the Pawnee girl that we have brought with us." Denials from the chiefs and repeated demands from Colonel Dodge were then followed by a gloomy silence. The accidental discharge of a pistol came like a thunderbolt and almost stirred the already over-strained feelings in the council to the war point.

Finally a negro offered Colonel Dodge the information that the Indians were now holding the young boy as a prisoner in the village. The Colonel then became still more stern and persistent, declaring that the council would stop until the boy was surrendered. Further consultation followed among the Indians, who finally sent for the young prisoner who had been secreted in a cornfield by the savages. The friend of George Catlin has given a graphic description of the entrance of the child into this council.

> He is a smart and very intelligent boy of nine years of age, and when he came in, he was entirely naked, as they keep their own boys at that age. There was a great excitement in the council when the little fellow was brought in; and as he passed amongst them, he looked around and exclaimed, with some surprise, "What! are there white men here?" to which Colonel Dodge replied, and asked his name; and he promptly answered, "My name is Matthew Wright Martin." He was then received into Colonel Dodge's arms; and an order was immediately given for the Pawnee and Kiowa girls to be brought forward; they were in a few minutes brought into the council-house, when they were at once recognized by their friends and relatives, who embraced them with the most extravagant expressions of joy and satisfaction. The heart of the venerable old chief was melted at this evidence of white man's friendship, and he rose upon his feet, and taking Colonel Dodge in his arms, and placing his left cheek against the left cheek of the Colonel, held him for some minutes without saying a word, whilst tears were flowing from his eyes. He then embraced each officer in turn, in the same silent and affectionate manner; which form took half an hour or more, before it was completed.[62]

Negotiations with the Indians now became easier as Colonel Dodge explained that the great American President desired to make a treaty with them all and to exchange prisoners. "Peace cannot be made with all the tribes till a large white paper be written and signed by the President and the hands of the chiefs. Will your chiefs go with me now to see the American President?" They were also assured that the President would be very happy to see them and would make them presents of handsome guns, coats, etc. But objections and murmurings from the Indians now ensued, and Colonel Dodge concluded to close the council and to wait for the morrow.

We-ter-ra-shah-ro, an old chief of seventy years, with two other principal men met Colonel Dodge at his tent the next morning for a further "talk". The four leaders of the bands that had accompanied the dragoons from Fort Gibson were also present and participated in the council. Colonel Dodge once more urged that a few of the chiefs accompany him back to Fort Gibson: it was a plea for peace from a man who had grown gray in Indian warfare. Following further deliberations and consultations, the old Chief We-ter-ra-shah-ro was the first to announce some willingness to go. "We wish much to make peace," he said, "with the Osages; we have been long at war with them; we wish to see the lands of the Creeks and Cherokees also, to shake hands with all." Then spoke Dutch, the Cherokee, a man of remarkable personal beauty, daring character, and reputation for his successful enterprises against the Osages. He assured Colonel Dodge that the Cherokees and the whites were friends and that they could visit each other without fear.

Beatte, the leader of the Osage band, then made a speech. He was a Frenchman who had spent his life among the Osages and was widely known as a skilled hunter. "We look at our friend (Colonel Dodge) as our father", he said. "He is a true father to us all." He ended by urging that the chiefs visit the Osages with "our father as he wishes." Monpisha, another Osage, indorsed Beatte's speech, declaring that the Indians should be taught to build homes and to raise cattle. "Your buffalo will be gone in a few years", he warned. "Your great father, the President, will give you cattle, and teach you how to live without buffalo."

George Bullett, the Delaware, then gave assurance of the friendship of his people, after which Colonel Dodge resumed his speech. He expressed his regret that some of the dragoon horses had broken into some of the cornfields, and he promised to pay for the damage done. "I wish you now to consider if some of you will go with me", he said to the chiefs on their departure. The chiefs then signified their intention of going to their lodges to select some braves who should accompany Colonel Dodge to Fort Gibson.

Many Camanches arrived during the day and visited the tent of Colonel Dodge, who then repeated his "talk" given in the morning. Ta-we-que-nah, one of the three newly arrived chiefs, was warm in his professions of friendship, and offered to exchange a Spanish girl for the young Kiowa girl whom the dragoons had brought with them. But

Colonel Dodge wished to secure the friendship of the Kiowas and said to the chief: "I mean to give her to her relations and friends without price; I will give the girl to her tribe; they shall see how much their friends we are."

But here occurred a dramatic interruption. Twenty or thirty mounted Kiowas suddenly dashed into the camp and almost into Colonel Dodge's tent. These Indians believed that the whites were in league with the hated Osages in holding the Kiowa girl as a prisoner. They were admirably equipped for flight or fight, and with their bows strung and their quivers filled with arrows they presented a bold and warlike appearance. The dragoons looked to their own arms, the squaws and children fled in terror, and a battle seemed in prospect. Colonel Dodge, however, quickly relieved the strain, addressing them with assurances of friendship and with the intimation that the Kiowa girl should be restored to her father and friends. A general council between the Camanche, Toyash, and Kiowa nations was to be held the next day.

Not less than two thousand mounted and armed warriors surrounded the council where Colonel Dodge and his officers once more met the head men and chiefs of the various tribes. The Kiowas embraced Colonel Dodge, and savage hearts were moved to emotions of gratitude over the restoration of their relative. The squaws with tearful eyes embraced the girl seated among the chiefs, at the same time showering their blessings upon her deliverer.

The council began and the pipe of peace was passed. There was seated a group of American officers in their bright uniforms and swords; the savage Toyash looked at the arrogant and jealous Camanche; while the more chivalric and daring Kiowas made the fourth group of the council. Here bonds of friendship were pledged and promises of peace were made. Another band of sixty Kiowas now arrived, and when the ceremonies of their reception were ended Colonel Dodge made the formal surrender of the Kiowa girl. "Kiowa chiefs!", he said, "I herewith present to you your relation; receive her as the best evidence of the sincere friendship of Americans." This closed the council at the Pawnee Pict village.

On the next day the dragoons were to begin their return march; and early in the morning the chiefs of the three tribes visited Colonel Dodge, who presented them with guns and pistols. Fifteen Kiowas, including their chief, one Camanche, three Pawnee chiefs, and We-ter-ra-shah-ro, the old Wacoah chief, had finally consented to return with Colonel Dodge to Fort Gibson. Thus on July 25th was begun the return march from the Pawnee Pict village.

Over one hundred miles were marched in the first week of the return journey. "We are eagerly pursuing our way home", writes the journalist of Company I, "with our Indian Ambassadors who seem remarkably jovial & delighted with every thing they see[.] Nightly they amuse us with their wild unintelligible & unaccountable songs which are far from being displeasing as they all join in seemingly endeavoring to exceed each other in noise, altogether creating a compound of the most unearthly discord''.[63]

The overpowering heat and the number of sick greatly retarded the speed of Colonel Dodge's dragoons. By July 29th they had reached the buffalo range, and one or two deer were killed, while one man killed a panther.[64] ''At twelve o'clock the cry of buffalo was heard,'' records Lieutenant Wheelock on the same day, ''and never was the cheering sound of land better welcomed by wearied mariners, than this by our hungry columns. The command was halted, and some went together; the report of Beatte's rifle, and the fall of a fat cow; halted at 4 o'clock, killed two more buffaloes.''

Colonel Dodge finally decided to return at once to Fort Gibson instead of marching to Fort Leavenworth. Now and then a day of rest would be ordered for the jaded horses; not unfrequently men were lost in hunting buffalo; prairie fires broke out; and on August 5th Colonel Dodge was informed of the death of General Leavenworth and Lieutenant George W. McClure on the Washita River.[65] The last herd of buffalo was seen on that day, and ''L'', the chronicler of Company I, records that ''we were called upon to look our last look upon about 500 of these welcome Prairie Companions''.[66]

It was a warm and weary command that thankfully returned to Fort Gibson on August 15, 1834, after a campaign of just two months. The horses presented a jaded appearance and not more than ten were in good condition; many of the soldiers' uniforms were tattered and torn and showed evidences of strenuous service. On August 24th Colonel Kearny's command arrived, bringing its tired dragoons, its litters of sick, and its gaunt, worn horses.[67]

Unable to induce the chiefs to go to Washington, Colonel Dodge arranged for another grand council at Fort Gibson on September 1, 1834. Seven or eight tribes assembled, and for four days the fumes of the peace-making calumet drifted about the council. Choctaws, Cherokees, Osages, Kiowas, Senecas, Pawnees, Camanches, representing extreme types of Indian savages, met in friendly conclave under the protection of Colonel Dodge who believed that he had laid the foundation of lasting friendship between these frontier tribes.[68]

"Perhaps their never has been in America a campaign that operated More Severely on Men & Horses", wrote Colonel Dodge to George W. Jones. "The excessive Heat of the Sun exceeded any thing I ever experienced[.] I marched from Fort Gibson with 500 Men and when I reached the Pawnee Pict Village I had not more than 190 Men fit for duty they were all left behind sick or were attending on the Sick the Heat of the Weather operated Severely on the Dragoon Horses there was at Least 100 Horses that was Killed or Broke down by the excessive Heat of the Weather the Men were taken with fever and I was obledged to Carry Some of my Men in Litters for Several Hundred Miles".[69]

Thus a number of great Indian tribes were brought into a general peace and into an acquaintance with and respect for the United States government.[70] Besides the cost in money, much sickness and hardship had been endured and more than one hundred dragoons had lost their lives. Warm praise was extended to Colonel Dodge by Lewis Cass, the Secretary of War;[71] and George Catlin was well qualified to praise when he said: "Thus was dragged through and completed this most disastrous campaign; and to Colonel Dodge and Colonel Kearney, who so indefatigably led and encouraged their men through it, too much praise cannot be awarded."[72]

V

COLONEL KEARNY ON THE RIVER DES MOINES

ONLY a brief rest was allowed the dragoons after their fatiguing expedition to the Pawnee Pict village: again on September 3, 1834, three companies aggregating one hundred and thirteen men and commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Kearny set out from Fort Gibson. An order of the previous May from the War Department had directed companies B under Captain Sumner, H under Captain Boone, and I under Captain Jesse B. Browne to take up their winter quarters "on the right bank of the Mississippi, within the Indian country near the mouth of the Desmoines." Lieutenant George H. Crosman of the Sixth Infantry was detailed as quartermaster.[73]

On the second day of the journey several of the troopers became sick and Captain Browne became too ill to proceed. Soon they arrived at an Osage mission where several Indian families resided. These "subsist principally on fish & the chase with a few vegitables they raise themselves in poorly cultivated fields or rather patches". A dragoon in his journal recorded that they are "a filthy race but naturally of a robust constitution."[74]

Daily advances averaging about twenty miles were made during the three weeks march. Prairies, oak barrens, good timber, and thickly settled areas were traversed in turn during the journey across the State of Missouri. The dusty atmosphere of September 13th was cleared a few days later by a heavy rain which saturated the ground. The Missouri River was crossed at Boonville on September 19th, and the dragoons observed a country covered with farm houses and plantations. Six days later after steady advances the command arrived at the mouth of the Des Moines River.

The site designated for the encampment could boast of a long-established reputation. Sixty-five years before it had become Spanish territory, and in 1799 Louis Honoré or Tesson had been granted by the Spanish a tract embracing the area. For about six years Honoré lived upon his grant: a cabin was set up, some ground was cultivated, and an apple orchard of perhaps ten or fifteen acres was planted. Here it is likely that a brisk trade with the Sac and Fox Indians was begun in furs and peltries, and that boats would land to bring news and supplies from the Spanish city of St. Louis. About the year 1832 James White entered upon the land, fenced in an area of about seven acres, and built a double log cabin about thirty rods from the river.[75]

Colonel Kearny was disappointed because of the lack of quarters for his travel-worn horses and troops. "The quarters for the officers and soldiers," he reported with some impatience on the day after his arrival, "are not as far advanced as I had expected and not a log is yet laid for stables for our horses. We shall on the 28th go to work with all our disposable forces, and I hope by the close of next month we may complete the buildings, tho' they will be less comfortable and of meaner appearance, than those occupied by any other portion of the Army." The Colonel also requested that he be informed as to "what is required of this command, while stationed here".[76]

But the quartermaster was already erecting buildings close to where now lies the quiet village of Montrose, Iowa. James White's ground had been purchased for six hundred dollars and his cabin was converted into a hospital.[77] Soon the troops armed with saws, axes, planes, and hammers were at work upon the logs and upon the lumber brought by boat from Pittsburgh. The officers' quarters were near the river, while the soldiers' barracks forming a double L ran toward the river and left a beautiful area in the center.

Tents were in the meanwhile sheltering the troops. The construction of the quarters was in charge of Lieutenant Benj. S. Roberts, the acting commissary of the post, a young officer fresh from West Point. One row of barracks was just ready for the roof when the little lieutenant discovered that there were no doors in the barracks. Orders were given to tear down the structures and to cut out the doors. In vain the dragoons remonstrated and explained that notches had been cut in the logs and that the doors would be cut out with a cross saw when the roof was completed. But the tearing down commenced and it was only the order of Captain Browne which prevented the directions of the short-sighted lieutenant from being fully carried out.[78]

The winter of 1834–1835 was bitterly cold. "I chinked my cabin," wrote one dragoon, "put down a second hand carpet brought from St. Louis, [and] daubed and banked my private stable."[79] Colonel Kearny's letters complained about the uncomfortable quarters and the inadequate supplies. They recited the sufferings of the soldiers stationed in the wintry wilderness of what is now southeastern Iowa. Captain Boone rejoined his company and Lieutenant Burgwin succeeded Crosman in the administrative duties at the post. Lieutenant Colonel Kearny likewise urged that a name be given to the fort which had been referred to as "the Detachment Headquarters of the Regiment of Dragoons at Camp Des Moines, Michigan Territory." Accordingly not long afterward Secretary Cass designated the name of "Fort Des Moines".[80]

In the meantime Captain Sumner had been enlisting dragoons in Pennsylvania; while early in 1835 Lieutenant Lea repaired to Fort Gibson and returned with about seventy dragoons, which increased the force at the post to one hundred and fifty-seven.[81] In the spring Colonel Kearny received orders for the summer campaign, which was intended as a means of discipline and instruction for the soldiers who were no doubt weary of barrack duties.

Three companies were to proceed up the River Des Moines to the Raccoon Fork, to halt there, and to examine the site with a view to the erection of a military post in that vicinity. A full report upon this subject was to be made by the Colonel upon his return to Fort Des Moines. "After having made this reconnoissance Lieut. Colonel Kearny will proceed with his command to the Sioux Villages near the highlands of the Mississippi about the 44° of North Latitude, thence taking a direction to the westward return to his original position at the mouth of the Des Moines, passing by the right bank of that river."[82]

Soon the quiet camp became a scene of hurried activity as men, horses, mules, cattle, provisions, and tents were prepared for the eleven hundred mile expedition. Company B was commanded by Lieutenant Turner, but Lieutenant Burgwin with a small force was directed to remain at the post and to provide forage for the ensuing winter. On June 7th the detachment began its march. Fortunately the historian of Company I again kept brief daily notes of the movements of the dragoons.[83]

After advancing about fifty miles during the first week the force encamped near Keokuk's village — a point now marked by the town of Agency in Wapello County. The handsome prairies were sodden with the June rains, which with the wind and hail storms retarded the progress of the troops. The soldiers were in remarkably good health, although on the fifth day Captain Browne because of his illness was left behind. He was succeeded by Lieutenant Albert M. Lea. At the Indian town six or seven braves were secured to accompany the command and Frank Labashure, a brilliant but dissolute half-breed, was induced to serve as an interpreter.

"Marched 16 miles over a marshy Prairie", runs the journal entry for June 15th. "Encamped on a dry piece of land but at night had a hard storm of rain and wind accompanied with much thunder & lightning. We left opponuse or Iway town 6 miles to our left[.] Col. Kearney is very mild and the command in good health and spirits. So much rain renders marching unpleasant we have to encamp each night in mud & water but still I am better contented than when in quarters."

As mile after mile was travelled over what is now central Iowa the dragoons could not be insensible to the beauties of a prodigal nature. The silent undulating prairies, as yet undisturbed by the farmer's plow or even by the stakes and chains of government surveyors, stretched to the horizon on every side. The tangled, matted grass interspersed with many flowers now and then disclosed the charred remains of old vegetation which had been set ablaze by Indians. The June sun was reddening the strawberries and for mile after mile they offered, not to the eye alone, a welcome feast. Rivers and creeks skirted by shadowing timber and an occasional grove broke the monotony of plain. Deer in abundance furnished game for the Indian hunters, while large numbers of turkeys, grouse, ducks, and prairie chickens rose in alarm and took sudden flight before this unwelcome invasion of the United States dragoons.[84]

Failing to strike the Raccoon Fork of the Des Moines River, Colonel Kearny decided to march in a due course to Wabasha's village. The drenching rains had left water four or five feet deep, through which the men drew the wagon and led the horses. "Last night", noted the dragoon[85] on June 23rd, "was issued our last pork so that we must depend upon the chase & Beef for a supply (of which there is plenty)[.] Our salt and sugar are nearly exhausted but as yet we have plenty of flour".

Steady marching in a northeasterly direction during the last week of June carried the force into the present State of Minnesota. Day after day the cavalcade filed over the prairies now dotted with cities and homes. With much difficulty they forded numerous rivers and streams. The discovery of an old Sioux fort containing twenty or thirty dug-outs added interest to the anticipated meeting with that tribe. But the sight of a herd of buffalo on June 24th gave a thrill of excitement to many of the new recruits who had never seen this lord of the plains. At once the quiet march was interrupted by the jingling of spurs, the eager shouts of the men, and the trampling of buffalo and horses' hoofs over the prairie. The chase continued until five or six buffalo had been slain — the chronicler noting with satisfaction that "this day was spent in eating Buffalo beef & sleep". On the next day a hunter killed an elk which was a welcome addition to the soldiers' mess. Three days later (near the present city of Osage) another successful buffalo hunt was enjoyed and after some difficulty O. H. P. Miller, a dragoon from Virginia, captured a buffalo calf, which became an object of curiosity in the dragoon camp.

The northeasterly advance carried the little detachment through picturesque scenes. Oak barrens, the abundance of wood and water, high hills, deep valleys, cascades, and gushing springs provoked expressions of admiration from the usually brief pen of the dragoon writer. Deserted wigwams and patches of abandoned corn and pumpkins were signs of former Sioux habitations. When near the Mississippi he wrote: "I ascended one of the highest peaks, more than 1000 feet above the bed of the stream below. Far in the Horizon I could discern the broad waters of the Mississippi & Lake pepin spotted with here and there an Indian Canoe which from the eminence appeared like dots upon a mirror."

Nearly two weeks were spent in the vicinity of Wabasha's village near the present city of Winona in Minnesota. Soon a brisk trade in sutler's goods was conducted by Sergeant J. C. Parrott with the Sioux, who were described as "mostly a dirty thieving race living in the most abominably filthy manner." On July 19th Wabasha, attended by numerous followers who gazed in wonderment upon the well-equipped horses and the uniforms of the dragoons, visited the camp and concluded a treaty with Lieutenant Colonel Kearny.

The return toward the Raccoon Fork of the Des Moines was begun on July 21st in a due west course. In the present county of Freeborn in Minnesota a council was called to discuss plans for getting out of that almost impassable lake region. "In the meantime the men are taking their rest in the shade their horses grazing beside them. . . . The land about here is good. Grass & herbage of all kinds in the highest natural state. Grass 8 ft high. One of our Indians killed a grey Eagle on the lake shore. Signs of Beaver, Muskrat and otter. . . . Saw several handsome lakes & some of the most beautiful small Prairies I have seen since I have been in the West. I have seen some romantick and handsome landscapes but this far surpasses any country I have ever seen both for beauty & fertility".

A forced march of 35 miles on July 31st through what is now Kossuth County, Iowa, brought to view a region without wood or good water. "We are wandering about like half-starved wolves & no person appears to know in what direction we ought to steer. Much murmering by the men. Very cold for the season." In swift and steady movements during the next eight days Lieutenant Colonel Kearny advanced nearly two hundred miles, encamping on August 8, 1835, at the Raccoon Fork. There near a bubbling spring and a spongy meadow Lieutenant Lea and two brother officers could well enjoy the landscape as they feasted on a fat young buck and a flask of fine old French brandy.[86] And as they looked about no clouds of smoke marred the scenery and no gilded dome rose above the eastern horizon. Lieutenant Colonel Kearny and his officers rode over a considerable portion of the site and the country which surrounded it. The point of land between the two streams near their junction was about eight feet above water mark and widened out as the rivers receded. The Des Moines River was found to be one hundred and twenty yards wide and easily fordable. On the east side of the river there was an abundance of timber, such as oak, walnut, elm, ash, linn, and cottonwood, which was suitable for firewood and building material. From Lieutenant Lea's observations it appeared that the site was one hundred and fifty miles from the mouth of the Des Moines River by land and two hundred and sixty-six by water.[87]

The location was regarded by the Colonel as neither suitable nor advantageous for the erection of a military post. The navigation of the Des Moines River by boats large enough to carry military stores was at all times uncertain; the Sacs and the Sioux were peaceful and the establishment of a barrier between them was unnecessary; the upper fork of the Des Moines River would afford a more strategic location should such a barrier be needed; and finally the Sacs were decidedly opposed to the erection of a post at the Raccoon River, "giving as one of their objections, that the Whites would drive off the little game that is left in their country."

The homeward march from this point to the fort was without special event. Lieutenant Lea with one dragoon and an Indian descended the Des Moines River in a cottonwood canoe, estimating distances, examining the geology of the banks, sounding shoals, making sketches, and enduring the gnats and mosquitoes.[88] The dragoons following the right bank of the river arrived at the fort on the afternoon of August 19th after an absence of over ten weeks, and without the loss of any tool, wagon, horse, or man. "Sickness and all Disease", concluded the dragoon writer, "has been a stranger to the camp . . . . & upon the whole I can say we have had a pleasant Campaign".

A winter full of monotonous barrack life and drills followed; nor is it surprising that there was much card-playing after pay day. Drinking was considerable; and at least one dragoon captain from Kentucky was not a stranger to the grog-shops in Fort Madison.[89] It is not difficult to imagine that soldiers often loitered at the boat landing near the rapids. Keel-boats and steamers bound for the Galena lead mines, Prairie du Chien, and even the Falls of St. Anthony discharged their heavy freight to and from small boats in order to pass over the rapids. These craft landing supplies for the garrison likewise brought news from the outside world and letters from distant homes.[90]

"I landed at Fort des Moines [in 1835] only for a few minutes," described a steamboat passenger from England, "and had but just time to remark the pale and sickly countenances of such soldiers as were loitering about the beach; indeed, I was told by a young man who was sutler at this post that when he had left it a few weeks before, there was only one officer on duty out of seven or eight, who were stationed there. The number of desertions from this post was said to be greater than from any other in the United States."[91] The observer expressed surprise, in view of the facilities for escape and the lax punishment for desertions, that the ranks did not become even thinner than they were.

Some pleasant social life was provided by the few ladies at the post. An interesting event was the visit of Colonel Zachary Taylor, of soldierly bearing but of slovenly and careless appearance in his sky-blue trousers and cow-hide boots. Brightly dressed young soldiers would sometimes cross the river to Commerce where James White had a hospitable stone house and pretty daughters. And here with partners on a smooth floor and amid the strains of tortured cat-gut, the young soldiers forgot the irksome duties of barrack life at Fort Des Moines.[92]

Colonel George Croghan, who visited the post on December 3, 1835, found a force aggregating one hundred and eighty-four men and a total of two hundred and five horses and mules. The roofs of some of the buildings were leaky, the health of the garrison was unnecessarily bad, and the hospital facilities were very inadequate. In the following July it appears that Colonel Dodge resigned his command and was succeeded by Lieutenant Colonel Kearny who repaired to Fort Leavenworth. The command of Fort Des Moines was then given to

Captain Sumner until Major Richard B. Mason, who was to succeed Kearny, should arrive at the post.[93]

Another summer campaign was expected; accordingly, on June 6, 1836, a detachment of about one hundred men under Captain Sumner started for Fort Howard on Green Bay, far to the northeast. This destination had been decided upon partially by rumors of Indian hostility in that region. The overland march across Illinois led them through Peoria, and as they approached the village a trooper sounded a few notes on his bugle. "In a few moments", wrote an observer, "a lengthened troop of cavalry, with baggage-cars and military paraphernalia, was beheld winding over a distant roll of the prairie, their arms glittering gayly in the horizontal beams of the sinking sun as the ranks appeared, were lost, reappeared, and then, by an inequality of the route, were concealed from the view."[94]

The white tents were pitched on a low prairie bottom; arms and military accoutrements were stacked up or suspended on the branches of trees; while the troops, after picketing the horses to graze, engaged in the culinary operations of the camp or lounged upon the grass as the laugh and jests went free. "Captain S——", recorded a visitor, "received us leisurely reclining upon a buffalo robe in his tent; and, in a brief interview, we found him possessed of all that gentlemanly *naïveté* which foreign travellers would have us believe is, in our country, confined to the profession of arms."[95]

At Chicago they found a city of about six thousand people. Veering toward the north the command came to the thriving beginnings of Milwaukee. Advancing to Green Bay they ascended the Fox River, and later visited the garrison at Fort Crawford. After touching at Galena and at Rock Island the dragoons returned to the fort where they were given a sumptuous feast by the rest of the garrison.[96]

Henceforth the story of this post is concerned with its gradual abandonment.[97] Designed as a temporary camp, the fort had been maintained mainly because of the irresolution and delay of the military authorities. On September 18, 1836, Lieutenant Colonel Mason reported that speculators were encroaching upon the lands of the garrison, laying out a town, and selling lots. Other parties were erecting buildings and planning to sell whiskey to the Indians and to the soldiers. Orders from the War Department a month later directed the immediate evacuation of the post and on October 30th Captain Sumner with Company B departed for Fort Leavenworth.

It was a feeble garrison that remained during the winter. Many of the soldiers had been stricken with intermittent fever, and in the spring fleas invaded the camp.[98] Of the seventy-six men remaining the terms of enlistment of fifty-eight would expire during the winter or the ensuing spring. "The post is this day abandoned," wrote Lieutenant Colonel Mason on June 1, 1837, "and the squadron takes up its march for Fort Leavenworth. It has been delayed until this date in order that the grass might be sufficiently high to afford grazing for the horses, as corn cannot be had on some parts of the route.'' And so about eighteen dragoons, the remnants of companies H and I, bade a last, and perhaps hearty farewell to the hardships and joys of this rather inglorious western post.

VI

PRAIRIE TRAVELS TO THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS[90]

A MARCH of sixteen hundred miles through the regions now contained in the States of Nebraska, Colorado, and Kansas was the military achievement of the First United States Dragoons in 1835. This tour through a continuous wilderness of alternate prairie and woodland was the eleventh mounted expedition of Colonel Henry Dodge and the last time that he led a dragoon march. His troops moved along the Platte and far to the west along the South Platte, returning down the valley of the Arkansas and over a portion of the Santa Fé road. In these months of exploring the dragoons held talks and councils with numerous Indian bands and tribes of the plains.

Agreeably to an order of March 9, 1835, the detachment of dragoons under Colonel Dodge left Fort Leavenworth on the 29th of the next May. Company A with forty men was commanded by Captain Lan. P. Lupton; Company C of forty men was in charge of Captain Matthew Duncan; while the thirty-seven men of Company G were led by Captain Lemuel Ford. Lieutenant Enoch Steen was in command of two swivels. Lieutenant G. P. Kingsbury was the journalist of the expedition; while Major Dougherty, Indian Agent, and Captain Gantt, an Indian trader, accompanied the force as interpreters and guides. The three companies were directed to take sixty days' rations of flour and ten days' rations of pork; while twenty-five beeves and two wagon-loads of flour were to be taken by the assistant commissary of subsistence.

One hundred miles were traversed in a northwesterly direction during the first week. The line of march lay across the reservation of the Kickapoos and then across the Nemaha River in what is now the State of Nebraska.[100] Continuing, Colonel Dodge's command entered the lands of the half-breed Otoes and Omahas. On the 7th of June a large herd of elk was seen, but the hunters were not able to approach near enough to shoot them. The country was a beautiful and fertile plain, diversified with all the accidents of wood, creeks, and ravines.

Two days later the command reached the valley of the Platte River and encamped on its banks only seven or eight miles from the Oto village. Jutan, the principal chief of this tribe, who came to meet the dragoons, had been a bold and successful warrior. He is described by Lieutenant Kingsbury as a man "about fifty years of age, tall, well made, with a fine and intelligent cast of countenance." On the next day the village of the Otoes was reached and the dragoons were given a joyous welcome.[101]

Colonel Dodge (on June 11th) met the assembled chiefs and warriors at the lodge of Jutan, where a council was held. The Colonel informed the Indians that the President of the United States, "your great father" wished them to be at peace and to raise corn and cattle for the support of their families. Deploring the sale of whiskey to the Otoes, he said: "All unlicensed traders found in your country will be taken and delivered to the civil authorities, to be dealt with according to the laws of the country." After a brief reply by Jutan, presents of blankets, strouding, knives, and tobacco were distributed among the warriors and chiefs.

A week was spent here awaiting the arrival of a band of Omahas, with whom also Colonel Dodge wished to hold a council. These Indians, numbering about eighteen hundred, occupied the region between the Missouri and the Platte rivers. On the 17th of June about fifty of the principal chiefs and warriors swam the Platte River and arrived near the camp of the dragoons. After extending a welcome Colonel Dodge caused some provisions to be issued to them.

When the Indians were assembled Colonel Dodge repeated the "talk" which he had made to the Otoes a few days before. Big Elk, the principal chief of the Omahas, replied in a friendly vein, but declared that the presents spread before them had been the cause of creating a great deal of evil in the Indian country. He was a man of sixty years, of sound practical common sense, and with a knowledge which convinced him that the Indians needed to learn some of the arts of civilization.

The Pawnee village, in what is now Hamilton County, Nebraska, was the next objective point. For eighty miles the march continued up the Platte River over a rich, alluvial, treeless plain which appeared to be the old bed of a river. Herds of antelope and deer varied the monotony of the scene. It was ten or fifteen miles from the village that Angry Man, the principal chief of the Grand Pawnees, met the dragoons. He at once tried to ingratiate himself into the good graces of Colonel Dodge with whom he had a long talk.

Arriving at the Grand Pawnee village on the 21st of June, 1835, the dragoons were met by one hundred and fifty or two hundred Indians mounted on their best horses and dressed in their gayest costume. The Pawnees, having formed an extended line, advanced with full speed and galloped around the detachment two or three times. The chiefs then advanced to Colonel Dodge, and the pipe of peace was passed around and smoked. Angry Man then invited Colonel Dodge, with a number of the dragoons, to a feast in his lodge. There they were seated around the fire, and in strict accordance with Indian etiquette Colonel Dodge was given the highest seat. After a meal of boiled corn was eaten the dragoons made a brief march and encamped on the bank of the Platte.

The Pawnees at this time were divided into four tribes which lived in separate villages and had different chiefs. Angry Man was the chief of the Grand Pawnees. The chief of the Pawnee Republics was called Blue-coat; the chief of the Pawnee Loups was Axe; while the head of the Pawnee Tappeiges was Little Chief. For years these tribes had been waging an intermittent war with the Sioux and had often returned with scalps and large numbers of horses. They occupied a rich and productive country, well adapted to the raising of grain and to grazing. The buffalo, of which they killed large numbers, furnished their principal means of subsistence. "They are already impressed with a high opinion of the power of the United States," writes the dragoon journalist, "and it will not be difficult for the government in a short time to exert a controlling influence over them."

Colonel Dodge now declared his intention of holding a council with the different Pawnee tribes, and runners were at once despatched to inform the other villages of his arrival. Repairing with most of the dragoon officers to the lodge of Angry Man, Colonel Dodge addressed the assembled chiefs and warriors. He would be glad to make peace between them and their old enemies, the Arapahoes and the Cheyennes. The destructive effects of wars were pointed out, and it was urged that they devote themselves to the cultivation of corn. "Could you also learn to raise cattle," he suggested, "you would be able to support yourselves and families without depending upon the uncertainty of the chase."

To this advice highly rhetorical but rather friendly speeches were made in turn by the four Pawnee chiefs. "I thank you for treating these people so well", declared Angry Man. "You could not have been blamed if you had been more severe." When the council broke up presents were distributed by Major Dougherty, and the Indians appeared well pleased in obtaining new blankets, strouding, knives, and tobacco. They even informed Colonel Dodge that they would send one of their principal men with him to assist him in making peace with the Cheyennes and the Arapahoes.

One hundred and twelve miles were covered in the next week. Marching up the Platte River along the south bank, the dragoons passed the head of Grand Island on June 29, 1835, where they were mustered and inspected. Two days later Captain Gantt set out to collect the Arickaras who were supposed to be near the forks of the Platte River. On the evening of July 4th the dragoons saw their first herd of buffalo.

On the next day Captain Gantt returned bringing the chiefs and principal warriors of the Arickaras. "The Arickaras", writes Lieutenant Kingsbury, "are considered the wildest and most savage tribe of Indians west of the Mississippi, and have always been characterized by a want of faith in their promises, and an inveterate hostility to the whites, killing all they could meet. They are at war with most of the surrounding nations, and large numbers of them are killed every year. They formerly lived on the Missouri River, but were driven from this country by the Sioux, with whom they had long been at war. . . . There are now about two thousand two hundred of them in all, numbers of them having lately been killed by their numerous enemies."

Colonel Dodge's speech to the assembled Arickaras was full of advice and warning. The evil effects of inter-tribal wars were again pointed out; the stealing of horses was denounced; and they were reminded that several charges of murder were held against them. After the friendly nature and purpose of the dragoons' expedition had been explained, the Colonel delivered the greetings and the presents from the President of the United States. "He is mild in peace", warned the dragoon colonel, "but terrible in war. . . . You see but few mounted men with me; it was not the wish of your great father to alarm you and other remote nations of Indians with the appearance of a large army which he could have sent here with as much ease as the few warriors you see with me. The cannon you see are small in comparison with the large guns that could be sent to this country."

The chiefs replied briefly to this advice, and after extolling their past conduct expressed much friendship for the whites. One of the chiefs gave a hunting-shirt finely ornamented with beads to Colonel Dodge, who then distributed the usual presents among the Indians. On July 6, 1835, the council dispersed with many expressions of thanks and gratitude from the Arickaras.

Steady marching occupied the dragoons for the next two weeks, during which they covered over two hundred and fifty miles up the south fork of the

Platte River along its southern bank. "The elements of the scene", writes the dragoon journalist, "now were an unbounded prairie, a broad river, with innumerable herds of buffalo grazing upon its banks, and occasionally a solitary tree standing in bold relief against a clear blue sky."

Dragoon mounts and the men were in excellent health as they filed past charming scenes. Great herds of buffalo pawed the short grass or moved over the prairie. Herds of deer, antelope, and wild horses quickly retreated before Colonel Dodge's cavalcade. On the banks of the river the troops gathered *bois de vache* and drift wood for fuel. On July 15th the soldiers enjoyed a bird's-eye view of the Rocky Mountains, which were hailed with joy by the whole command.

Leaving the south fork of the Platte, whose banks the dragoons had hugged for many hundreds of miles, the command for the remainder of the month of July changed its course to a southerly direction.[102] Immense herds of buffalo were again seen; timber became more abundant; several kinds of wild fruit were found; and deer were numerous. On the 26th of July they crossed the dividing ridge between the waters of the Platte and the Arkansas. "The mountains were in the form of an immense fortification with turrets and rock-crowned battlements, and pine trees along the covered line relieved against a clear blue sky. The different passes between the mountains appeared to be guarded by large terraced watch-towers."

On July 30th Colonel Dodge's detachment camped upon the banks of the Arkansas River. There he learned that fifty lodges of Arapahoes were encamped on the opposite side of the river and that the remainder of the nation with a large number of Cheyennes were hunting buffalo only about two days' ride distant. Two days later Captain Gantt left the command for the purpose of collecting these bands together.

Sixty miles of marching up the Arkansas River brought the dragoons to the fort of Bent and St. Vrain on the 6th of August, 1835. Here Messrs. Bent and St. Vrain carried on an extensive trade with the Indians in buffalo robes, knives, blankets, and tobacco. Two villages of Cheyennes were found near this fort. These Indians were very fond of whiskey and would sell their last possession to get a drink of it. "In arranging the good things of this world in order of rank," writes Lieutenant Kingsbury, "they say that whiskey should stand first, then tobacco, third guns, fourth horses, and fifth women."

Captain Gantt on August 10th returned to camp bringing a number of Arapahoes, a few Gros Ventres, and two or three Blackfeet. On the next day Colonel Dodge held a council with a number of chiefs, warriors, and principal men who represented these tribes. The views and wishes of the government were then fully explained and once more the Colonel advised the Indians to smoke the pipe of peace, to observe treaties, and to stop their warfare against the whites.

With the assistance of Colonel Dodge three chiefs were now selected for the three bands of Cheyennes present at the council. The Colonel then put around the neck of each of the chiefs a medal, which he assured the Cheyennes was the symbol of their new offices. Presents were next distributed according to the number of Indians in each nation; and then the council adjourned with many expressions of gratitude and good will for the dragoons and their commander.[103]

Two days after this council the line of march was continued up the Arkansas River. On August 14, 1835, the dragoons arrived at a Cheyenne village of about sixty skin lodges and held a council with the principal braves. The next morning the whole command was aroused by sharp firing about half a mile distant. "Supposing this firing to be an attack on the Cheyenne Indians", wrote Colonel Dodge, "and that this band might ask protection from me, I instantly formed the Dragoons in order of battle, until I could be informed as to the cause of the firing."

In a brief time, however, a band of about one hundred Pawnees and Arickaras arrived, explaining that they had fired their guns in order to prove their friendly disposition by approaching with empty guns. A council was then called and Colonel Dodge, the mutual friend of all three tribes, induced them to forget old scores and to become friends. The Pawnees and the Arickaras received more than a hundred horses as presents from the Cheyennes, who in turn were given fifty guns. "You will be convinced'', ran the Colonel's parting advice, ''that your true interest is to hold each other strong by the hand as brothers and friends, and never again to stain your hands by the blood of each other.''

Although unfamiliar with the art of speechmaking, the Cheyennes expressed a wish that Colonel Dodge tarry several days in order that they might hunt and bring him buffalo meat. ''The good effects of the expedition'', writes Lieutenant Kingsbury, ''are thus becoming apparent, and it will probably have the effect to establish peace among all the different tribes between the Arkansas and the Platte. This will be of immense advantage to these Indians, as they will thereby have an extensive country opened to them, covered with innumerable buffalo, where they can hunt in safety without the fear of being attacked by their enemies.''

Long daily marches down the Arkansas were made in the next week across plains, and hills, buffalo grass, and prickly pear.[104] On the 21st of August, 1835, the detachment took the old Santa Fé trail where it crossed the Arkansas River. Lieutenant Kingsbury's journal is hurried, as are the dragoon advances over the high barren prairie. No wood could be found and the soldiers cooked their food over the hot fires of buffalo dung. Arriving at the Pawnee Fork the command halted for a day in order to kill buffalo to provision them to Fort Leavenworth. The horses were made to swim the swollen stream, while the baggage was transported across in buffalo skins.

For forty or fifty miles the line of march bore down the Arkansas River. Late in August the course of march veered to the north. Forced marches were the only incidents of note during the next week. "Continued the march", concludes Lieutenant Kingsbury's narrative of this expedition. "Crossed the Hundred-and-ten mile creek, and entered upon the dividing ridge between the Kansas and Osage rivers; passed Round and Elm Groves, and arrived at the crossing of the Kansas, at Dunlap's Ferry, on the 15th; crossed the river and on the 16th arrived at Fort Leavenworth."

High praise was accorded to the whole command for the success of the expedition, which Brigadier General Edmund P. Gaines regarded as extraordinary and unprecedented. The general urged that "a sword [be] given to Colonel Dodge, a brace of pistols to each one of his commissioned officers, and a month's extra pay to each one of the non-commissioned officers and soldiers who accompanied him". He believed that the Indian tribes had been judiciously impressed with the justice, magnanimity, humanity, and power of the government, with no loss of life except that of one dragoon.[105] This success Gaines believed to be due to the "very great vigilance, care, and prudence, on the part of the colonel and his officers, and constant attention, obedience, and fidelity on the part of the non-commissioned officers and soldiers."

VII

THE WESTERN MILITARY FRONTIER
1837–1840

For the four years beginning in 1837 the activities of the First Regiment of Dragoons are interwoven with the laying out of a western zone for Indian occupation and the improvement of a western frontier line of military defense. These tasks were not new, for both had been performed in the older States; and the Indian had been anvil rather than hammer during the years when the steady forces of settlement drove the tribes westward.

The removal of the Indians to the Louisiana Purchase had been a policy of the government since Secretary of War Calhoun's report in 1825. The treaties at Prairie du Chien in 1825 and 1830, and the Black Hawk Purchase treaty of 1832, are epochal in the readjustment of the Indian frontiers.[106] Gradually the pressure of population had forced the Indian from the northern and southern areas of occupation until an irregular but shifting line from north to south marked the boundary between the two races.

A glance at the location and number of Indians for 1837 reveals the magnitude of this policy of removal. East of the Mississippi there were 49,365 Indians of whom 36,950 were under treaty stipulations to remove to the west of the river. The number in the indigenous tribes within striking distance of the western frontier was 231,806. The Indians who had emigrated from the east to the west of the Mississippi totalled 51,327. Among these 332,498 Indians, it was estimated, there was a total fighting strength of 66,499 warriors.[107] A map for this year shows an irregular zone of Indian lands to the west of the Mississippi. North of the Red River are shown in order the Choctaws, Seminoles, Creeks, Cherokees, and Osages. Farther northward were the Shawnees, Kansas, Delawares, Kickapoos, Iowa, Otoes, Omahas, Pawnees, and Potawatomi. But toward the east of this belt of occupation there were still huge peninsulas and islands of Indian lands, the title to which was being gradually extinguished.[108] The record of this policy of removal is an epitome of the story of the Indian, the soldier, the surveyor, and the settler.

To these numbers the weakness of the military protection for the westward-moving settlements in 1837 stood in marked contrast. A thin line of posts extended from Fort Snelling on the Mississippi to Camp Sabine in Louisiana. About eighteen hundred troops, including six hundred and twenty-six dragoons, and shifting from one post to another, performed field and garrison duties and constituted the only Federal force. But before the close of 1837 the removal of four garrisons left only eight establishments with any troops.[109]

Year after year military authorities had pointed out the weakness of this frontier force and had urged that it be strengthened. A rather elaborate plan for a stronger western military frontier was presented late in 1837.[110] This contemplated a line of exterior posts projected into the Indian country beyond the existing cessions for the purpose of repressing or overawing intertribal hostilities or uprisings against the settlements. Likewise an interior line of posts was considered which might furnish places of refuge during special danger or alarms and depots for arms and supplies. Efforts to realize the execution of this plan constitute a considerable part of the history of the western military frontier for the next four years.

Colonel Kearny had also urged that the limits of the western frontier should be definitely settled. He suggested that there should be one regiment of infantry or artillery and one of dragoons for the frontier between the Mississippi and the Missouri rivers. An equal force should protect the frontier between the Missouri and the Osage rivers; and two regiments of infantry or artillery and one of dragoons should be placed between the Osage and Red rivers. Such a force for a frontier of a thousand miles he regarded as a reasonable estimate.[111]

Owing to desertions and the expirations of enlistments the regiment of dragoons seldom possessed its full quota of men. Captain Sumner was usually detailed upon recruiting service at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and there new men were secured to fill the ever-recurring vacancies in the dragoon ranks. In 1838 six companies under Colonel Kearny were stationed at Fort Leavenworth, and four companies were quartered at Fort Gibson under General Arbuckle. Fort Smith was occupied by a garrison in July, 1838; but Fort Coffee, likewise in Arkansas, was abandoned a few months later.[112]

Additional forts, urged the Secretary of War in 1838,[113] should be constructed on the western frontier, the existing posts should be enlarged and strengthened, and all stations should then be connected by military roads perpendicular to the line of defense. Jefferson Barracks could be made a center around which the militia of the various States might rally. "The sparse population of the Western frontier," continued Secretary Poinsett, "and the number, character, and proximity of the enemy we have to guard against in that quarter, will require that the garrisons of the several posts should be stronger than on the maritime or Northern and Eastern frontiers."

But few field movements seem to have been made by the dragoons in 1838. Early in that year Colonel Kearny left Fort Leavenworth and steamed up the Missouri River with a force of dragoons on board the "Antelope". Alarmed, perhaps, by rumors of inter-tribal hostilities, Colonel Kearny set to work erecting barracks and a block-house twenty-four feet square. This rude encampment was known as "Camp Kearney near Council Bluffs", but was soon transferred to the Jesuits for their missionary headquarters among the Potawatomi.[114]

Later in the year other rumors of Indian councils and uprisings among the Cherokees near Fort Gibson induced General Gaines to set in motion a force of about 10,000 men.[115] The militia was summoned and soon the troops from Fort Leavenworth and Jefferson Barracks were on their way to the scene of an anticipated Indian war. "But being informed, while on the way thither, that the object of the meeting was of a pacific character, he ordered the troops back to their stations."

Surveys for a military road on the western frontier were begun this year. The northern section ran from Fort Snelling to Fort Leavenworth; on the middle section, extending from that point to Fort Smith, construction work had begun; while the southern and shortest section connected Fort Towson and Fort Smith. At the latter station work had been delayed by the high waters of the Arkansas River, but at Fort Leavenworth the quarters had been repaired and enlarged and stables had been erected for the dragoon horses.[116]

Work on the military roads continued in 1839, and in March of that year Congress appropriated over $52,000 for the "surveying and opening of the western frontier military road."[117] The southern section, about one hundred and forty miles in length, was completed that year and Captain Joseph Bonnell with fourteen oxen traversed its entire length in April and May in eight and one-half days. The route was diversified by severe ascents, pretty prairies, and steep hills.[118] Seventy-two miles of the middle section were completed and about two hundred miles were left for future construction. But upon the road from Fort Leavenworth to Fort Snelling, advised the quartermaster general, neither money nor labor should be expended because the whole country was an open prairie that could easily be travelled in all directions.[119]

But little progress was made on the barracks at Fort Smith and at Fort Leavenworth, although a considerable sum was appropriated for work on the western frontier for that year. A force of dragoons under Lieutenant Colonel Mason was sent to commence the erection of Fort Wayne — a new post on Illinois Creek about half way between Fort Gibson and Fort Smith. Four additional posts should be established, urged the quartermaster general. "The effect of those works, with the frequent movement of bodies of mounted men on the road between them, would be to intimidate the Indians inclined to become hostile, and inspire those disposed to be friendly, as well as our own citizens, with confidence. Should war occur, they would constitute the proper base of operations, each post forming a rallying point for the militia and volunteers in its rear, and for such friendly Indians as might be disposed to join our standard."[120]

Field campaigns this year gave several companies of the dragoons relief from their garrison duties. Two squadrons furnished in the spring an escort to a caravan of traders bound for Santa Fé. Later in the year five companies of dragoons were sent from Fort Leavenworth to Fort Gibson, where rumors of Cherokee uprisings against the settlers had been persistent. In July a company of dragoons journeyed from Fort Leavenworth to Bellevue with some Omaha Indians, formerly captured by the Sauks, and delivered them to their tribe. Three unlucky dragoons were drowned in crossing the Platte River.[121]

From the land of the Otoes came rumors of the unfriendly disposition of those Indians, who were manifesting an arrogant attitude toward the government employees of the agency at Council Bluffs. Colonel Kearny immediately mustered about two hundred men under Captains Boone and Allen, and on September 5, 1839, set out from Fort Leavenworth for another field campaign.

"Following generally the old 'Council Bluffs' road, on the south side of the Missouri river," wrote a member of this detachment,[122] "the troops moved leisurely onward, over a country luxuriant, picturesque, and at some points beautiful; the monotony of the march being varied by, at one time, the abrupt banks of some prairie stream, to allow the passage of the wagons, and, at another, of turning from a direct course to head some hollow whose marshy bottom would bear neither man nor horse."

Wolf Creek, the Great and Little Nemaha rivers, and other streams were crossed in turn, and soon the dragoon horses were wading through the low waters and quicksands of the Platte River. On the low sandy beach of the stream they discovered the skeleton of one of the three dragoons who had been drowned there a few months before. The now useless sword, belt, and cartridge-box lying near the owner's remains and marked by the letter of his company, identified the unfortunate dragoon. The skeleton was carefully placed in a box, conveyed to camp, and in the evening buried with the honors of war.

The Oto and Missouri tribes, numbering less than one thousand souls, lived about midway between Bellevue and the Platte River upon the edge of a level plain skirted by timber. Their condition was rather deplorable: game was decreasing; the cultivation of the corn crop was only moderately successful; there were charges of bad faith in treaty-making; and the whiskey-peddlers from the south flourished. The attempts to civilize these Indians, the Indian Agent, Joseph V. Hamilton believed, had not produced any beneficial effects.[123]

A council to be held on the 16th of September was agreed upon. "After a delay of unusual length, though at no time remarkable for punctuality," relates one dragoon, "a long string of warriors, boys and women, gave notice of the approach of the nation." The motley crowd was halted by the dragoon sentinels and about twenty of the chief men then dismounted, approached the encampment, and took their seats in the council. Upon the invitation of the Colonel the members of the nation came forward and ranged themselves in concentric circles about the council fire. "Observing that, contrary to custom, the Indians had come into council armed, the commanding officer refused to have anything to say to them while thus equipped, and directed them to lay aside weapons which he neither feared nor had come to contend against. This being done Col. Kearny addressed the council.''

The dragoon commander declared that he represented the Great Father and that he was glad to see the Indians. Reports of misconduct had come to him and he now demanded that the offenders be given up to be publicly chastised, since the whole nation could not be punished. Three young braves were thereupon surrendered and some Pawnee chiefs present bitterly reproached them for their misdeeds.

Here Agent Hamilton arose, requesting that the prisoners be not publicly whipped and promising to answer for the future conduct of the prisoners. To this the Colonel finally yielded and Hamilton explained to the Otoes that he had pledged himself to Kearny for their good conduct hereafter. It was with great relief that the council dissolved and the firm and courageous attitude of the dragoon commander had not been without effect upon these savage minds.

On September 17th the dragoons swam their horses over the Missouri River and on that night the detachment encamped in one of the Potawatomi villages. Twelve chiefs having appeared, Colonel Kearny discussed with them the plan of a new treaty which contemplated an exchange of their present lands for others south of the Missouri River. The

Colonel likewise advised them to inspect these lands with a view to their future occupancy. The return march was without incident and the two companies arrived at Fort Leavenworth on September 25th.

By the year 1840 the fringe of settlement in the Louisiana Purchase included the present States of Louisiana, Arkansas, Missouri, and the eastern part of the Territory of Iowa; and the western military frontier coincided roughly with its western limits.[124] Although about 41,000 Indians had been removed to the west of the Mississippi River since 1836, the military frontier of 1840 was even weaker than usual. The twenty-six companies in the nine posts aggregated in December only about sixteen hundred men. A squadron of dragoons had been sent to reinforce Brigadier General George M. Brooke at Fort Crawford on the Mississippi, five companies remained at Fort Leavenworth for garrison duty, while Captain J. P. Simonton with forty-four dragoons had been spending some time in fruitless efforts to construct a fort on the unhealthful site chosen for Fort Wayne.[125]

Work commenced at Fort Wayne had been abandoned in June, 1839, because of the unhealthfulness of the site. Four companies of dragoons and one of infantry had been quartered in barracks situated on a small stream near Illinois Creek, and in the summer of that year the sick report ranged from sixty to one hundred and twenty.[126] A new site, however, was chosen about equidistant from Fort Gibson and Fort Smith, and late in this year a detachment of seventy dragoons under Captain E. B. Birdsall was steaming up the Arkansas River on the "Trident" to reinforce the garrison at Fort Wayne.[127]

Mechanics, citizens, carpenters, and soldiers joined in the work of erecting temporary quarters before the approach of winter. Although there was no finished lumber or saw-mill, produce for the garrison was cheap and plenty. "Whiskey, too, is awfully abundant, and a great drawback", described an observer. "The soldiers will drink it; and it is most pernicious in its effects, being of the worst possible kind, and sold very cheap."[128]

Appropriations for the further erection of barracks at Fort Wayne, Fort Smith, and Fort Leavenworth aggregated $100,000 in 1840.[129] Provisions, too, constituted a large expense in maintaining the various garrisons. The commissary-general's advertisement for bids on goods to be delivered at Fort Smith in 1840 called for the following articles: 1000 barrels of pork; 2000 barrels of fresh, superfine flour; 900 bushels of new white field beans; 400 bushels of good, clean, dry salt; and 15,000 pounds of good, hard soap.[130]

The year 1840 seems to have been one of peace on the western frontier. In March news came to Fort Leavenworth that the Otoes had crossed over into Missouri and were killing stock and insulting or threatening the settlers. Captain Boone made a quick march with two companies of dragoons on March 24th, and soon the valley of the Nishnabotna was again peaceful.[131] In September Colonel Kearny led a party of his dragoons among the Potawatomi. As the result of a council which was held a better feeling was established between them and the neighboring tribes.[132]

VIII

PATROL AND GARRISON DUTIES IN IOWA TERRITORY[133]

BESIDES an exterior line of garrisons the erection of a number of interior, temporary posts in the West became a policy of frontier military defense as early as 1840. The maintenance of treaties and order among the settlers as well as among the Indians necessitated the presence of troops in immediate contact with the tribes. It was in the Territory of Iowa where such a force was on duty at four posts — not to conduct a war or to repel invasions but to keep watch over the Indian traders, the fur companies, the coming and departing Indians, and to coöperate with resident Indian agents.

Between the Mississippi and the Des Moines rivers in the Territory of Iowa a rectangular strip of land forty miles wide had been ceded by the Sac and Fox and Sioux tribes as early as 1830. Two years later the Winnebagoes ceded all their lands east of the Mississippi and, after June, 1833, agreed to occupy this strip, known as the Neutral Ground. But loath to leave the homes of their ancestors the Winnebagoes migrated slowly; and so another treaty was negotiated in 1837. It was not until about June, 1840, however, that the last band, diseased in body and wounded in spirit, settled upon the new habitat chosen for the tribe.[134]

It became the duty of the government to provide military protection for these weak villages, surrounded as they were by warlike neighbors and inclined to rove beyond the limits of their reservation. In May, 1840, a company of eighty-two men from Fort Crawford encamped within the reservation on Turkey River. The next year this encampment was given the name of Fort Atkinson. On June 24th the dragoons of Company B arrived at the post and were quartered in barracks erected that year. It was advised, however, that heavy expenditures on the works be not made because the pressure from the settlements would soon drive the Indians farther north or south. Repairing and construction continued in 1842, a magazine, stables, and picket works being completed.[135]

Barrack life at Fort Atkinson disclosed to the dragoons a sad picture of their 2183 wards. A conquered race physically, intellectually, and morally, the Winnebagoes showed little interest in the subagency mill and farm intended for their benefit. Whiskey was obtained from places nearly two hundred miles distant, and "scenes of wretchedness, bloodshed, and murder, are transpiring so frequently in their drunken frolics, that they have ceased to be objects of wonder and attention."[136] Hundreds joined the sub-agent's temperance society, but soon they were drinking more than before.

Patrol duty often took the dragoons from the fort upon distant tours. Upon the requisitions of Governor John Chambers of Iowa Territory detachments were sent to remove squatters and other intruders from the Sac and Fox lands to the south and to prevent their return. Not a few pioneers from the eastern part of the Territory were unable to refrain from unlawfully settling upon the beautiful Indian lands or from staking out claims, surveying, or marking boundaries for future locations.

About the year 1841 the dragoons, discovering that Leroy C. Evans had made a claim on the Indian lands (near the present town of Bloomfield in Davis County), set fire to his cabin and fencing. Nearby another squatter named Culver planted in the season of 1841 a fine crop of corn, beans, and other vegetables with the hope of obtaining a profitable harvest. But in the fall a detachment of the dragoons swooped down upon his claim, burned his house, and destroyed his crops. In Wapello County, also, James Jordan and others squatted upon the Sac and Fox lands,[137] disregarding the warnings of the Indian Agent, John Beach. A force of dragoons under Lieutenant C. F. Ruff appeared. The squatters were allowed to remove their household goods; but their fences and homes soon disappeared in smoke and flame.

Forty-four dragoons of Company I under Captain Allen, after a long overland journey from Fort Leavenworth, arrived at Fort Atkinson on August 7, 1842. So urgent had become the need of a military force among the Sacs and Foxes that Captain Allen was soon on his way to the agency where he went into quarters. Here he was joined a few months later by Lieutenant William N. Grier and eighteen other dragoons. Such was the force at the "Sac and Fox Agency", otherwise known as Fort Sanford, until its abandonment on May 17, 1843.[138]

No other point upon the Indian frontier, urged Agent Beach, was more in need of a permanent military force.[139] "Within a period of less than two years, it has been necessary three times to call for a detachment, whose march on each occasion has been attended with much expense and inconvenience; while requisition for another to attend the approaching payment has been sent. No obstruction, no means of prevention, here exist to the continual passage to and fro in the Indian country of the most lawless and desperate characters, who can at any time commit outrages against order, morality, and the laws, with perfect impunity."

On September 17, 1841, Lieutenant Thomas McCrate's fifty dragoons encamped at Iowa City, and in the next month witnessed the unsuccessful negotiations in which Governor Chambers attempted to induce the Sacs and Foxes to cede their lands in Iowa Territory.[140] A year later when the treaty was consummated a dragoon force witnessed an equally picturesque scene. The savage garb of thousands of Indians stood in contrast to the simple dress of the pioneers and especially to the brilliant uniforms of the dragoon officers. There were solemn deliberations, and also Indian yells making the October nights hideous. Squads of dragoons kept from the council the curious and hopeful onlookers; and Captain Allen and Lieutenant Ruff in witnessing the treaty could well imagine the tide of settlement that was soon to follow.[141]

Eight rude log cabins, then only recently the establishments of the American Fur Company, sheltered the dragoons during the severe and lingering winter of 1842–1843. Two other huts for the officers and some stables completed the camp. From Fairfield, a little village twenty-one miles to the east, a weekly express brought mail for the dragoons which no doubt furnished a welcome break in the monotony of almost daily visits of Indians, government agents, and impatient settlers.

Social life at the agency could not have been very gay to the dragoon officers still bearing the memories of balls at West Point. Ladies were few and settlements were widely separated; but at the home of the Indian interpreter, Josiah Smart, and his wife hospitality was generous and delightful. On February 22, 1843, farm wagons and horses bearing the pioneer folk were on their way to Fairfield, where Jefferson County had gathered its beauty and its chivalry. Handsomely attired in their uniforms, Captain Allen and his subordinates shone conspicuously as cotillion after cotillion carried the festivities far into the early hours of the morning.[142]

On the far western frontier, meanwhile, five companies had made an expedition from Fort Leavenworth to the Arkansas River. Fort Wayne, after a checkered and inglorious record, was finally abandoned on May 26, 1842. Two troops of dragoons and also a company of infantry in the same month erected Fort Scott in the present State of Kansas; while Fort Croghan was established as a temporary post on the last day of this month.[143] These with a few other transfers constituted the principal operations on the western frontier in this year.

Fort Croghan, first called "Camp Fenwick" and located on the left bank of the Missouri River near the site of the present city of Council Bluffs, had been established by Captain Burgwin, who had ascended the river on a steamboat with sixty or seventy dragoons from Fort Leavenworth.[144] It was situated in the Council Bluffs sub-agency, and the troops stationed there were to prevent hostilities between the Potawatomi and the Sioux, to coöperate with the officials in enforcing the law and regulations against the whiskey traffic, and perhaps to preserve order at the time of the payment of the Indian annuities.

Contrasted to the Indian poverty was the abundance of bird and animal life surrounding the dragoon encampment. Magpies, starlings, wrens, cowbirds, hawks, orioles, and various kinds of blackbirds were plentiful; while on the streams were ducks, geese, and stately herons and pelicans. Deer sometimes scampered over the prairies, and wolves prowled about the camp. In the month of July a hunting expedition of twenty Indians and twenty dragoons killed ten elk, fifty-one buffalo, and one hundred and four deer within eighty miles of the encampment.[145]

John James Audubon, the naturalist, who came up the Missouri River on the "Omega", a boat of the American Fur Company, has left some glimpses of the dragoons at Fort Croghan as they appeared in May, 1843. A few dragoon carbine shots in front of the "Omega" induced the captain to anchor his craft, and an officer then announced his intention to search the vessel for smuggled liquor. Audubon at once secured a dragoon horse and rode out to visit Captain Burgwin at the camp. The old barracks and parade-ground, he was told, had been inundated by a freshet and the tents had then been pitched four miles farther away. Later in the day the dragoon officers returned the visit, and on board the "Omega" were regaled with luncheon and liquor.[146] The search was then made; but the delay had enabled the captain to outwit the dragoon inspector, and soon the boat with its load of liquor was safely on its way.[147]

A fourth post in Iowa Territory to be occupied by a dragoon force was Fort Des Moines at the junction of the Des Moines and the Raccoon rivers.[148] It may be recalled that the Sac and Fox treaty of 1842 permitted the Indians to reside for three years in the west half of the area then ceded. Captain Allen visited the site soon after the treaty and submitted an elaborate report which urged that a fort and garrison be established to protect the Indians in their treaty rights while they resided on the cession. Orders to construct the fort were issued in February, 1843, and in the spring the dragoons forsook the Sac and Fox Agency and removed to the new site. The steamer "Agatha" labored up the Des Moines River, carrying supplies for the new post from St. Louis, and a keel-boat brought up some property from the Sac and Fox Agency. By May 21st about fifty dragoons and about forty-five infantrymen had arrived at the site, where a store-house, barracks, a hospital, officers' quarters, the sutler's house, corrals, and stables soon rose above the plain on which is now located the capital of Iowa.

For nearly three years this post was a patrol center among the Sacs and Foxes, and the small garrison was usually on active duty. Vagabond speculators and traders hovered about the post and the agency. Again Agent Beach bitterly denounced the whiskey traffic and those harpies who were preying upon his wards settled within sight of the agency and upon the Skunk River — all too near the whites.

Even Captain Allen was accused of treating the Indians to whiskey; and at the garrison there were rumors that both the dragoon captain and the sutler had a particular object in getting the Indians drunk just when the annuities were paid. One soldier, it is said, passed the jug to the Indians in the presence of some of the officers. "It is a fact that the location of Fort Des Moines among the Sac and Fox Indians (under its present commander,) for the last two years, has corrupted them more and lowered them deeper in the scale of vice and degradation, than all their intercourse with the whites for the ten years previous."[149]

Squatters impatient for the termination of the treaty were crowding upon the boundary line and both tact and firmness were necessary to prevent hostile acts. In the winter of 1844 a band of Foxes strayed back to their old homes on the Iowa River where they became so troublesome to the settlers that a force from the post compelled them to return. Similar expeditions were necessary during the following year until October 11th, when all the Sacs and Foxes, save about a hundred sick and infirm, sorrowfully left the Des Moines Valley for their new lands on the Missouri.[150]

At Fort Des Moines the dragoons had now performed their mission and the evacuation of the post began early in 1846. The dragoons last remaining escorted the remnant of the Sacs and Foxes to their new homes and soon after were exchanging reminiscences with old comrades at Fort Leavenworth.

IX

ON THE CANADIAN AND ARKANSAS RIVERS

EXPLORATION and the protection of the caravans of overland merchants on their way to Santa Fé constituted the principal tasks of several companies of dragoons during the year 1843. These escort duties led them over the old trade route across the present State of Kansas, while their trail of exploration winds between the Canadian and Arkansas rivers in the States of Kansas and Oklahoma.

Captain Boone with sixty dragoons left Fort Gibson on May 14, 1843, for a tour which lasted about eleven weeks.[151] For almost two weeks the squadron moved along the Arkansas River over hills, prairies, ravines, and steep ascents. On the 20th Lieutenant Abraham R. Johnston with twenty-seven men of Company D joined the march, and on that day the troops crossed the Arkansas River. Deer and antelope sometimes scampered over the prairies and elk tracks attracted the keen eyes of Captain Boone. Presently the column was crossing old stamping-grounds where weather-beaten skeletons and staring skulls indicated the former presence of hordes of buffalo.

"The destruction of these animals yearly", observed Captain Boone in his *Journal,* "and their falling off so rapidly makes it certain, almost, that in a few years they will only be known as a rare species. More than 30,000 robes for commerce come down the Missouri annually, these added to those which go elsewhere, must make the tax on the buffalo robes annually come to exceed 100,000. Taking into consideration the fact that the animals destroyed for food are taken in the summer while the hair is almost all off, and, of course, the robe useless, we can readily account for this disappearance from the grounds we have been travelling over, and make it certain that the buffalo must soon cease on these plains altogether."

Late in May several old Indian lodges were discovered and soon the dragoons were guests at a camp of thirty-five or forty Osages who had just killed twenty-five buffalo. The following morning the lariats were found cut and ten horses and two mules had disappeared. The Osages now appeared and reported that the theft of the animals was the work of the Pawnees. Captain Boone immediately sent thirty men in pursuit who galloped over the trail for thirty miles and then lost it in a sandy plain. Suspicion was then fixed upon the Osages, one of whom soon afterward was seen riding one of the stolen mules. The horses, however, were never recovered.

By steady riding during the first week in June, Captain Boone advanced across salt plains, reddish soils, creeks, ravines, and sand drifted in heaps by the winds. Here and there the dragoons observed deer, antelope, prairie dogs, and sometimes buffalo in large numbers. The detachment then struck the Santa Fé trace — a thoroughfare rutted by traders' wagons which for many years had jolted over the course between Independence, Missouri, and Santa Fé.

A clump of timber —"Mulberry Grove"— sheltered Captain Boone's command on the 7th of June. Then for about two weeks the dragoons advanced westward on the Santa Fé Trail. A small party of traders bound for Santa Fé and California was found on the Little Arkansas River. They informed Captain Boone that the Governor of Santa Fé was expected at the Arkansas River with an escort for them.

The second week of June was inclement and Captain Boone's *Journal* notes frequent storms of sleety rains, hail, thunder, and wind. Thickets of elm, box elder, and plum gave relief to dragoon horses which had been fording creeks and wading through banks of drifted sand. Cow Creek was crossed, and on the 10th of June the column forded the waters of the Arkansas River.

Three days later the command encamped at the mouth of Walnut Creek. On this stream three companies of dragoons under Captain Cooke were encamped — an advance guard for a caravan of about fifty wagons bound for Santa Fé. "As the traders had gotten within 12 miles", thought Captain

Boone, "and there was no guessing at, when the water would allow them to come on, and as they appeared by the intelligence furnished by Captain Cooke, to be in no sort of apprehension of an attack, we prepared for a move tomorrow."

After marching thirty miles over alternate stretches of clay, sand, and prairie, Captain Boone's command invaded a great buffalo range. From an eminence the soldiers enjoyed the grand sight of perhaps ten thousand buffalo feeding on the plains below as far as the eye could see. "In destroying them," explained the *Journal,* "the surest weapon is a short barrelled shot-gun carrying a large ball; as they are the most easily managed. . . . The fat of the buffalo is more oily than tallow and is better for cooking. In selecting an animal from the herd to kill, one should look to their thickness through the hump, they will be the fattest that are broadest through there, and plump. For a mile or two they run almost as fast as a horse, and are then easily caught. Their hides are very thick and from the form of the animal they are well adapted to make skin boats of."

The marches during the last week of June offered pleasant scenery. Water from clear springs refreshed men and animals, and the evening encampments were surrounded by groves of cedar, elm, and cottonwood. Gypsum beds, salt rock, contorted mineral forms, and brackish streams which cut up the country into a multitude of little valleys, gave character to the surface. Buffalo were observed almost daily, and elk at times timidly approached the dragoon camps. A dragoon officer gave chase to a mustang which sounded the alarm to a herd of about thirty others, and all then fled in terror across the uneven plains.

Emerging upon a plain Captain Boone rode over a wide expanse of salt which had been carried up from underground rock salt by springs. The crystals deposited on the surface formed a white layer which cast a glare in the bright sunlight. A few days later on the Cimarron River another saline, called by Captain Boone the "Rock Salt", was discovered where the springs had deposited a rock or crust of salt covering about one hundred and sixty acres. "In many places through this Rock salt crust the water boiled up clear as chrystal [*sic*]; tempting to one suffering from thirst; but so salt, that our hands after being immersed in it and suffered to dry, became as white as snow."[152]

Easy marching brought the dragoons to the Canadian River on July 11, 1843.[153] Although the bed of this stream was about half a mile wide it contained but little water and was easily forded by the column. For the next week Captain Boone travelled down the valley of this river along its southern bank. Buffalo were becoming scarce, but occasionally wild horses would gallop over the ridges and ravines.

Inspection of the dragoons at this time would not always have revealed a trim column. Dust-covered troopers urged on their jaded and perspiring horses;

while the mules patiently dragged the three camp wagons over rough plains and ravines. The scarcity of water and the swarms of flies caused both men and animals to suffer. Heat waves danced and quivered in the noonday atmosphere, but relief and repose came in the evening camps under clear skies.

The Canadian River was again crossed on July 18th, and on that day Lieutenant Johnston with his company left Captain Boone to march to Fort Washita. "Remained in camp to day", says the *Journal* for July 24, 1843, "to rest our jaded cattle and to dry our beef. Indians visited us throughout the course of the day, bringing in marketing of various kinds — Seemed to regard our presence as a kindly visitation of providence in supplying them the means of disposing of some of their produce and the means of getting a little money."

Early in the morning of each day the squadron resumed the march. On July 25th the burial of a dragoon accidentally killed by a carbine detained Captain Boone for a brief time, but soon the command left Fort Holmes behind. Then the sight of the timber along the Arkansas River gave promise of rest and better quarters. It was at mid-day on July 31, 1843, that Captain Boone's companies halted and then broke ranks on the parade ground at Fort Gibson.

Captain Cooke late in the summer of 1843 again performed the duty of protecting a caravan on the Santa Fé Trail.[154] For over twenty years the ends of the trail at Independence and at Santa Fé had witnessed this far-flung traffic, the history of which is stocked with tales of wealth and failure, dangers and adventure, picturesque scenes and humdrum toil. In 1829 Major Riley had led a military escort over a portion of this trail of seven hundred and seventy miles, and five years later Captain Wharton's dragoons had seen similar service. In 1843 the growth of the commerce and the public demands for its protection had again brought military forces upon the route.[155]

Wagon after wagon heavily loaded with goods for the Mexican trade at Santa Fé had been leaving Independence during August of 1843. Blue Camp, Round Grove, Oregon Trail Junction, Black Jack Point, and 110-Mile Creek were well known points on the trail. Steady travelling for one hundred and fifty miles finally brought the traders to Council Grove, the spot where they assembled and organized the caravan for the long journey to Santa Fé.

To the four companies of dragoons directed to escort the caravan the encampment here presented new scenes. Council Grove was a fertile bottom land of about one hundred and sixty acres heavily timbered with oak, elm, hickory, ash, and walnut. Scores of wagons loaded with such articles as cotton cloth, calicoes, hardware, soap, sugar, and coffee betokened a wealthy caravan. Here too it was customary to cut extra axle-trees and to make other repairs for the heavy Pittsburg or Dearborn wagons. Oxen and mules, grazing in the lush grass, dotted the hills and valleys. Not unlikely the air was vocal with the rude jests of the wagoners, farmers, or backwoodsmen, as well as with the oaths of Mexican drivers as they harnessed the animals or reloaded the merchandise of the caravan.[156]

Soon the motley line of dragoons and traders was moving across the prairies. On September 3, 1843, it arrived at Diamond Spring[157] where there was good camping ground and cool water from a spring. Cheers, unearthly yells, and volleys of whipcracks from the swarthy Mexicans urged on the overworked mules. On September 6th the traders halted near Cottonwood Fork. In the next three days the dragoons, although retarded by rains and tormented by mosquitoes, advanced over forty miles.

"All day it has rained again", complained Captain Cooke for the 9th of September. "We have been lying still, trying to keep dry and warm, on the bank of the Little Arkansas. There are a few green trees and bushes, but little fuel. Worst of all is the case of the poor horses — they are starving and freezing before our eyes, for the grass is very coarse and poor; they have shrunk very sensibly in twenty-four hours."

Here Captain Cooke awaited the coming of the traders who had been left far behind. A squadron of dragoons worn and tattered came from the south and joined the command; but they soon departed on the return trail to Fort Leavenworth. Drills, inspections, reorganizations, and the reading of a few old newspapers occupied the dragoon captain. Not until

September 14th did the traders commence to cross the Little Arkansas.

Leaving the slow-moving traders behind, the dragoon escort met a small group of traders who were returning from a successful trading venture at Santa Fé. At Cow Creek buffalo were observed and there an unfortunate dragoon was accidentally wounded by a carbine. Numerous buffalo at Walnut Creek prompted a chase, with the result that the command on that day feasted on buffalo meat instead of beef. In another day the force was resting in the shade of cottonwood trees on the banks of the Arkansas River, where men and animals were attacked by swarms of mosquitoes.

For about twenty-two miles Captain Cooke's cavalcade continued to advance on the trail along the north bank of the Arkansas. A dismal, cold rain pelted the dragoons as they waded through muddy quicksands or shivered in their fireless camps. "In vain was excitement offered in the shape of the most convenient herds of buffalo; cows, calves, in far family groups, kicking up the mud as they ran past almost into our faces:— a cape saturated to board-like stiffness, thrown back — a sodden holster-cover half raised — a horse urged to a deeper splash or two — and then, reaction brought us to the cold stage again!"

The encampment at the "Caches" offered fresh grass to the hungry dragoon horses. An express from the belated caravan informed Captain Cooke that the traders were still water-bound at Cow

Creek. A raw, searching wind having arisen, the dragoon captain in his cheerless camp wondered whether he would be compelled to winter on the Arkansas River or whether he would be enabled to enjoy his books and the company of his comrades in the more cozy quarters of Fort Leavenworth.

The first day of October dawned fair and bright. On the 5th Captain Cooke observed a Mexican escort at the Cimarron Crossing on the Arkansas River. This stream then formed the international boundary and President Santa Anna had sent about two hundred Mexicans to escort the traders from this point to Santa Fé. An invitation to visit the dragoon camp was declined by the Mexican commander, but Captain Cooke lingered to see the caravan ford the Arkansas River.

Mounting his command in order of battle, Captain Cooke directed a salute in honor of the Mexicans to be fired from the howitzer battery.[158] As the reports travelled down a fine reach of the river the shells bounded and rebounded on the stream and finally exploded under the chilly water. The traders now resumed their journey of about three hundred and eighty miles, but Captain Cooke's dragoons turned their faces toward home.

The return journey was made in about two weeks by steady marching. In a beautiful bend of the Arkansas River a forest of antlers indicated a large herd of big game; on that evening the dragoon camp enjoyed elk steak in abundance. At the Pawnee Fork great numbers of buffalo were heard as they splashed through the river in their nocturnal migrations. Another herd was seen at Ash Creek, and five were slain within a mile of the camping ground.

One after another of the camps of the previous summer was passed, the retreat being hastened by fears of starvation for the mules and horses. Water was freezing every night and the frost-covered grass was no longer fit for the dragoon horses which were beginning to drop on the trail. Dragoon blankets were shared with them and the dead grass chopped with knives was mixed with flour to be fed to the hungry horses.

When the hospitable shelter of Council Grove was reached some of the broken-down horses were left to rest and to await the arrival of forage. Here the Santa Fè trace was abandoned, and the groves at 110-Mile Creek induced Captain Cooke to linger for several days. Now and then prairie fires fanned by the October winds caused dense clouds of smoke to rise high in the air.

As Fort Leavenworth loomed into view the soldiers forgot the toils and hardships of the recent campaign. Their work for the season was about done, and they were now indulging in the luxury of visions of letters and newspapers from home, crackling log-fires, and a winter of repose and enjoyment at the old barracks of Fort Leavenworth.

X

CAPTAIN ALLEN'S JOURNEY TO THE NORTHWEST

A NOTEWORTHY event in the brief history of Fort Des Moines (No. 2) was Captain Allen's march in the summer and fall of 1844. This expedition of seven hundred and forty miles crossed the present States of Iowa, Minnesota, and South Dakota—areas at that time embraced within the Territory of Iowa. The records of this military movement preserve interesting accounts of adventures as well as geographical information.[159]

August 11, 1844, was the day on which the cavalcade commenced to file across the prairies toward the north. The company consisting of about fifty dragoons was provisioned with pork for forty days, flour for sixty days, and small rations for seventy days. The route designated in the orders was "up the Des Moines river, and to the sources of the Blue Earth river of the St. Peter's; thence to the waters of the Missouri; and thence returning through the country of the Pottowatomies."

For about three weeks the dragoons advanced along the west bank of the Des Moines River and then along the east bank of the west fork of that stream — a distance of about two hundred and fifty miles. Wagons heavily loaded with provisions and camp equipment were dragged by mules and oxen over prairies interspersed with ravines and covered with tall grass.

Daily marches of about fifteen miles soon disclosed a fine game country which yielded elk, deer, coons, squirrels, and waterfowl in plenty. Soldiers dripping with mud and water helped to drag wagons over flooded prairies; wagon tongues sometimes broke; and camping places were found with difficulty. "About five in the afternoon," wrote Captain Allen, "while we were fast in a mudhole, there came a tremendous storm from the north, with torrents of rain; and night and pitch darkness, with rain, thunder, and cold, found us three or four miles from timber, and unable to go further; there was no firm ground about us, and there we spent the night as we best could, without fire, shelter, or food."

Clearer skies returned as the column meandered about in a region containing smooth, glassy sheets of water. Although Medium Lake was unknown to Captain Allen by name, he could not repress admiration for its shores skirted by primeval groves of trees that were reflected from the surface. Here one of the men shot an elk; and large flocks of ducks, geese, and swans, thus rudely disturbed, forsook their favorite haunts to fly from such strange invaders.

Captain Allen, unaware that he was traversing a region destined to be classic ground for the future geologist, failed to observe the fertility of the soil. "The whole country is good for nothing," he writes, "except for the seclusion and safety it affords to the numerous water fowl that are hatched and grown in it." Wading through tall, luxuriant grass the troops encamped on Swan Lake which is still an abiding attraction in the rural landscape. Lieutenant P. Calhoun then explored Turtle Lake — a body of water "7 or 10 miles long, of beautiful character, with bright pebbled shores, and well-timbered borders, having a small stream running into it from the westward, and also an outlet to the eastward."[160]

Shetek Lake, the source of the west fork of the Des Moines River, was explored on September 1, 1844. A fleet elk eluded Captain Allen, but a large black bear was chased into the dragoon column. Horses and mules snorted with terror until a regular fusillade of shots by the dragoons brought the animal down. Five years before J. N. Nicollet, a French geographer, having pitched his tents for three days in this region, was especially impressed by the abundance of fish and the groves of trees encircling the lakes.[161]

Leaving Lieutenant Patrick Noble with twenty-five men at the lake, Captain Allen advanced northward thirty-seven miles and then eastward to the Minnesota River (then called the St. Peter's River). Two elk were shot on the prairie, but two others after a long chase escaped. "I do not like elk meat," comments Captain Allen. "It has a coarse fibre, is unlike the deer, and I think a mule would taste about as well."

From the Minnesota River the dragoon captain marched southward over a country marked by marshy ponds and broken rock. The land observed on this trip was regarded by Captain Allen as almost worthless: the soil was poor, timber was scarce, and troops marched over the region with difficulty. In two days, however, the command travelled fifty-seven miles, rejoining Lieutenant Noble on September 6, 1844.

Charmed by the scenery and the abundance of waterfowl at Lake Shetek, the dragoons remained encamped for two days and then steered westward for about forty miles. Hour after hour the little detachment shogged along over wide level prairies dotted with little lakes. "Encamped near sunset on the border of a slue, in the open prairie, there being no timber in sight; the night cold, cloudy, and rain." On the following day three buffalo were killed, and so in the evening camp on the Big Sioux River the cooks prepared buffalo beef instead of the usual pork.

It was a rough course over which the dragoons travelled in their marches down the valley of the Big Sioux. On September 10th a group of Indians came to the encampment and informed the dragoons that there was a trading-house at a point many miles down the river. In the morning two days later twelve horses and mules were missing and parties were sent out in all directions to find the animals, with the result that eight were recovered. Captain Allen suspected the Sioux Indians, whom he regarded as "great rascals, and capable of any theft." Since no trading-house could be discovered the dragoon captain believed that the Indians had basely deceived him. "It is said of the Sioux," he complained, "that they are prouder of, and more habituated to, lying than truth-telling, and here is pretty good evidence in support of the charge."

Though timid and agitated, these Indians gazed with some wonderment upon Captain Allen's force encamped on the buffalo range. Saddles, carbines, and camp utensils lay in profusion on the prairie, and horses and mules were picketed in the tall, luxuriant grass. Soldiers in uniforms more or less travel-stained were resting about the camp, perhaps smoking or discussing their unbidden Indian guests. During the chilly night sentinels stood guard while troopers sated with buffalo meat may have dreamed of thrilling buffalo hunts on the prairies. In the morning sleepy dragoons awoke to find the grass heavy and white with the first September frost.

The picturesque falls where now is the city of Sioux Falls excited the interest and admiration of the dragoon captain. Here an hour or two was spent making observations. Captain Allen estimated the fall to be one hundred feet in four hundred yards. One fall was twenty feet, another eighteen, and a third ten. The rock on the borders of the stream was split, broken, and piled up in irregular and fantastic shapes, and deep chasms extended from the stream in all directions.

Buffalo hunts were almost daily incidents of the marches. South of the falls the hunters charged a herd of more than one hundred animals just as the command was preparing to go into camp. The thud of hoofs and the reports of carbines sounded through the night air, and then two cows and a calf dropped on the prairie. The game, which during the night was guarded from the wolves by sentinels, was dressed on the next day. In what is now Lyon County, Iowa, six men fired a volley into a buffalo bull standing on the opposite side of the river. "We might have killed hundreds by delaying for the purpose," declared Captain Allen.

Luxuriant timber and rich alluvial soil came into view as the detachment descended the picturesque valley of the Big Sioux. But as the dragoons neared the mouth of the river ugly hills, broken ravines, and high bluffs retarded the movements of the troops. There were broken wagons, jaded horses, and disgruntled drivers. "Of course", remarks Captain Allen on September 19th, "we had all sorts of trouble, upset one wagon twice, killed one mule, and broke another wagon square off at the hounds. The romance of marching through a wilderness country is much abated."

On September 20, 1844, the squadron remained encamped to repair the wagons. Captain Allen, however, set out with four men to find the mouth of the river which they had so laboriously traced. For seven miles they encountered bluffs, ravines, valleys, and swamps. They pushed through tall grass, plum-bushes, and willow-thickets dripping in the cold

September rain. Then Captain Allen beheld the muddy waters of the Missouri, and, on ground now occupied by a portion of Sioux City, he observed the effects of the great flood of the previous spring.

Glad to leave "these terrible hills" of the Missouri he commenced to march southeastwardly for Fort Des Moines.[162] There was plenty of hard work in constructing bridges across brooks, fording deep and miry creeks, or in preparing the banks of streams to be crossed. The long marches tired men and animals; even the entries in the *Journal* of Captain Allen became more brief as the soldiers labored towards the fort.

Descending the Raccoon River, Captain Allen's men were perhaps too weary to note in detail the hills, bluffs, and groves which appeared and then receded from view. Heavy frosts deadened and blackened the grass and gave a sombre aspect to the morning landscapes. Dragoons walked miles and miles over the prairies to relieve their tired animals which were suffering from want of proper feed. In Dallas County a fine bear was chased over the prairies until a dragoon sergeant riding at full gallop shot him dead with a carbine.

Eight miles were travelled on October 3, 1844. Teams were jaded, wagons dilapidated, and soldiers travel-worn when the command returned to Fort Des Moines at noon on that day. To Captain Allen remained only the pleasant duty of preparing the detailed narrative of this successful summer campaign.[163]

XI

CAPTAIN SUMNER'S VISITS AMONG THE SIOUX

At the twenty-two posts in the western division of the army in 1845 there was a total of about 1900 men. The ten companies of dragoons were stationed at four forts where they performed garrison duties and from which expeditions into the Indian country were despatched. In this year over two hundred men were enlisted at various stations to take the places of dragoons removed by sickness, death, and by the expiration of terms of enlistment.[164]

Captain Sumner with a company of about sixty men at Fort Atkinson, besides effectively checking the sale of whiskey to the Winnebagoes near the Turkey River Agency, had marched to the Minnesota River in the summer of 1844. On June 3rd of the next year Company B again departed from Fort Atkinson to penetrate the Indian country drained by the Minnesota River in what was then the Territory of Iowa.[165]

The northwesterly advance was slowed by the June rains which had saturated the prairies. Swollen streams were crossed, and lakes, pools, and marshes compelled many extra miles of riding. On

June 13th Captain Allen with his company from Fort Des Moines joined Captain Sumner's column, and officers and privates then related their experiences of the previous summer. A few days later two men of Captain Allen's company were injured by the accidental discharge of a pistol. Without other special incidents the companies arrived at Traverse des Sioux on June 22nd.[166]

Here was the great crossing place of the Sioux bands as they wandered back and forth over the buffalo ranges of the Minnesota Valley. Captain Sumner learned that the whiskey trade flourished in this region and in the past two months hundreds of kegs filled with the liquor had been transported up the river.[167] The dragoon officers listened, perhaps, to discouraging tales from the Indian teachers residing at this place; and so Captain Sumner told the Sioux that their great father, the President, very much desired that they should obey the instructions of the missionaries.

A boat which had ascended the river from Fort Snelling with howitzers and provisions had been awaiting the arrival of the dragoon force. But only seventeen barrels of flour out of the thirty-one requested had been forwarded. "This mistake", declared Captain Sumner, "subjected my command to great inconvenience, for I was not in a country where it could be corrected by purchase."

Ascending for six days the rich valley of the Minnesota River the troops arrived at Lac-qui-parle on July 1st.[168] Several hundred Wahpeton Sioux dwelt here for a portion of the year and cultivated patches of melons, squashes, and potatoes under the instruction of the missionaries. An unkempt crowd of Indians greeted Captain Sumner, who gave them some presents and then called them to a council.

The government, began the dragoon captain, felt a deep interest in their welfare and promised protection as long as they did not molest the settlers. He noted, however, that these Indians seemed unwilling that troops should interfere with the half-breeds from the British settlements. "I am convinced that the Indians would prefer that that people should continue to hunt upon their lands, than that our government should send troops through their country to keep them out."

A halt of three days was made at Big Stone Lake[169] where the dragoons met the stares of another band of Sioux. A council was called and presents were again distributed — although Captain Sumner declared that the gifts stood in contrast to the very liberal presents of the English agents. Three Indians charged with murder were impudent enough to march directly into the dragoon camp, where they were quickly seized by Captain Sumner who sent them to Dubuque for trial.

Persistent rumors of the ill-will of the Sioux and of their purpose to secure some of the dragoon horses came to Captain Sumner. "As the best method of guarding against this threat, I always took occasion to say to the Indians in council that I was not at all afraid of their stealing our horses, intimating by manner that they could try it as soon as they pleased; but I would just tell them, by way of caution, that if an Indian came near them at night he would be instantly shot; and it gives me great satisfaction to report that not an animal was stolen from the squadron this summer."

Devil's Lake was reached on July 18, 1845,[170] after many leagues of travel across the headwaters of the Red River of the North. About one hundred and eighty half-breeds, descendants of English, Scotch, Irish, and French settlers, who were encamped here, listened to talks by the dragoon officer. For years these half-breeds had been making regular incursions into the Sioux country from Canada. Carts and wagons drawn by oxen would return from the Sioux hunting grounds laden with the spoils of the chase. Dried meat, tallow, and hides in vast quantities supplied the Hudson Bay Company to the north; it was estimated that the annual slaughter of buffalo amounted to about 30,000.[171]

Warned by the dragoons that they had been trespassing upon the territory of the United States, the half-breeds offered the pleas that they were ignorant of any wrong-doing and that they were but hunting upon the lands of their Indian parents. Through interpreters Captain Sumner learned that "they had followed this life from childhood, and knew no other, and they did not know what they could do if our government inhibited them at once from their old hunting grounds."

The dragoon leader regarded this band of about six hundred half-breeds as shrewd and sensible, but lacking in discipline and leadership. "It will be an extremely difficult thing to keep these people out of the country, if they should determine to disregard the order. . . . There seemed to be a strong disposition among them to become citizens of the United States; and I am much inclined to believe that many of them will become so, within a few years, without receiving any encouragement from our government."

Many Sioux parties were met on returning to Traverse des Sioux where the detachment arrived on August 7, 1845. Sullen looks were sometimes directed at the soldiers, but the bands refrained from open violence. The Indian who had stolen Captain Allen's horses in the previous summer was arrested here and sent to Fort Snelling. Thus the Indians were to be shown that government horses "are inviolable, and that they cannot be touched by them without the certainty of punishment at the time, or afterwards."

This was for Captains Allen and Sumner their last northerly campaign. At Traverse des Sioux the companies separated on August 11, 1845, and Company I returned to Fort Des Moines. Eight days later Captain Sumner's journey ended at Fort Atkinson.

XII

COLONEL KEARNY ON THE OREGON TRAIL TO SOUTH PASS[172]

TWENTY-TWO hundred miles measure the expedition of Colonel Kearny from Fort Leavenworth to the South Pass in the summer of 1845. His detachment, which consisted of about two hundred and fifty men, travelled during the outward march along the Oregon Trail, while the return journey was along the valley of the Arkansas River and the Santa Fé trace. Executed in ninety-nine days, the campaign was rightly described as having been made "with extraordinary despatch and success."

It was a well mounted and equipped regiment that departed from Fort Leavenworth on the clear morning of May 18th. The dragoons armed with carbines, pistols, and cartridges presented a genuine military appearance. Such officers as Cooke, Burgwin, Turner, and Moore had become veterans of many western campaigns. Two mountain howitzers and seventeen camp wagons stocked with supplies and provisions lumbered and rattled in the rear of the column.

In just about a week Fort Leavenworth had been left one hundred and twenty miles behind. Northwesterly trails of other marches guided Colonel Kearny as he moved along broken and picturesque grounds of the Missouri and then struck the open prairies. After crossing the elevated plain between two branches of the Blue River, the troops forded that stream and soon arrived on the Oregon Trail.

This grand transcontinental highway was to witness in 1845 the passage of about three thousand settlers bound for the Oregon country. On the 24th of May dim, white spots — the slowly-moving emigrant wagons — were observed on the distant horizon. A nearer view revealed to the dragoons the light wagons drawn by oxen and laden with provisions and children, while scattered about were large droves of cattle browsing in the lush grass. Joel Palmer, a shrewd, young farmer from Indiana who had but recently been chosen captain of one of the emigrant companies, recorded that Colonel Kearny's troops had with them "nineteen wagons drawn by mules, and drive fifty head of cattle and twenty-five head of sheep."

Passing the caravan Colonel Kearny moved up the valley of the Little Blue River. Other caravans were still in advance, and like swarms of locusts had consumed the grass at choice camping places. Each day after a march of twenty or twenty-five miles the dragoon mounts had to be tended; the wagons were unloaded; the tents pitched; and the evening meal was cooked. In the morning the grass was cropped, so that to the coming emigrants the place could afford only an inhospitable welcome.

The travellers next crossed the shallow waters and quicksands of streams whose banks were lined with cottonwoods, oaks, and pea vines. There were rolling prairies gashed by ravines and narrow valleys, bold hills, and sand-gullies. The soldiers listened to the songs of birds and perhaps ate the wild turkey and antelope of this region. A midnight storm brought furious wind, lightning, thunder, and a rain which beat heavily against the canvas tents.

Another emigrant caravan was passed and Captain Cooke estimated the number of cattle at a thousand. In another party he counted thirty-one men, thirty-two women, sixty-one children, twenty-four wagons, and two hundred and twelve cattle. Men, women, and children often sickened on these long journeys and solitary graves, sometimes covered with wolf tracks, began to mark the trail. Francis Parkman, the historian, passed over this route just a year later. On a grassy hill a piece of plank standing upright attracted his notice and there he read a brief story of sorrow on the prairies: MARY ELLIS. DIED MAY 7TH, 1845, AGED TWO MONTHS

When the regiment encamped on the Platte River on May 29th it had travelled about three hundred miles. The universal features of the valley were fresh green meadows, banks of sand, and sometimes clumps of timber. "Near us", wrote Joel Palmer who encamped near the spot two days later, "the Platte bottom is three and a half miles wide, covered with excellent grass, which our cattle ate greedily, being attracted by a salt like substance which covers the grass and lies sprinkled on the surface of the ground. We observed large herds of antelope in our travel of to-day. In the evening it rained very hard.''

As they filed along the south bank of the silent stream the troops felt the charm of springtime. Grass was more abundant and the islands which studded the river were covered with shrubs and trees from which came the songs of larks, blackbirds, curlews, and mocking-birds. But on a Sabbath day the dragoons observed a mournful procession of about fifty emigrant wagons. Leaving the regular trace far to their right the pioneers had come to a grassy hill where they conducted the funeral rites of a young infant — the toll of the Oregon Trail.

Every morning the reveille roused the troops to another day's march. They invaded a colony of chattering prairie dogs, with staring screech owls and rattlesnakes for neighbors; greyhounds chased the antelopes through the tall grass; buffalo were pursued over the plains; and squalid wolves slunk over the hills and sandy ravines. Emigrant caravans, driving before them great herds of cattle, were passed again and again. In one place they found a discouraged party: the oxen had been frightened away, several persons were sick, and one poor woman was at the point of death.

Thomas Fitzpatrick, the guide, led the column past the ''Forks of the Platte'' and then along the south bank. ''Now'', described a dragoon captain on June 4th, ''we stop to water at a small running branch, the first we have seen; it is without a tree; a buffalo calf approaches, and is evidently trying to join our cattle; but some men turn it off: there is the mother, which a hunter pursues up the steep hills; it is exhausted, but his horse refuses to go near; he has fired — probably ineffectually: we pass on. At 3 o'clock, we encamp at some ponds, in the middle of the bottom. Many horseloads of meat are brought in: the buffaloes — nearly all cows and calves,— are not yet fat."

On June 6th the travellers waded through the shallow waters and quicksands of the South Platte and then continued northward until they saw the waters of the north fork. They encamped at Ash Hollow or Ash Creek, where there was a fine spring and wood and grass in abundance. The spot was well known. Captain Bonneville had passed it in 1832 and seven years later A. Wislizenus, a German physician, had observed it. Fitzpatrick, the guide for the dragoons, recalled that he had visited the region with Lieutenant Frémont in 1842. In the hegira of 1845 thousands of emigrants hailed this little oasis with delight.

Leagues and leagues were ridden in the next five days over a distance now crossed by the traveller in less than that number of hours. On June 9th Colonel Kearny met a flotilla of flat-boats laden with buffalo robes and other articles of Indian trade. The good-natured, patient boatmen were in the employ of the American Fur Company, and for weeks had been floating and pushing their rude vessels down the sluggish and shifting stream. The dragoon officers regarded these sun-burnt, athletic boatmen with a curious interest, and very likely Colonel Kearny received much information about distant Fort Laramie, the best grazing and camping places, the presence of Indians, and the number of emigrants on the route.

The spectacle of Colonel Kearny's command afforded these boatmen a welcome change from the monotony and arid desolation of the plain. Clouds of dust rose behind the dragoons as the black, grey, and chestnut colored mounts shogged over the dry plains. Sabres clanked and carbines glittered in the June sun. The travel-stained dragoons in addition to their arms were equipped with blankets, great coats, picket ropes, and iron pins. It is very possible that the boatmen were allowed to taste the coffee and beans from the commissary wagon or to get a new supply of tobacco.

Next the soldiers beheld Court House Rock, a mass of sand and clay, looming in the distant horizon like an ancient tower. Then they approached the fantastic form of Chimney Rock, which, declares a pioneer, "has the unpoetical appearance of a haystack, with a pole running far above its top." Near this a clear, cold spring refreshed men and animals.

Hour after hour the column plodded along over a contorted wilderness of mounds, hills, cliffs, and rocks with here and there patches of sagebrush and cactus. Then they gazed upon Scott's Bluffs, a famous landmark on the trail and the Gibraltar of the prairies. On June 12th they encamped on the grassy meadows of Horse Creek, which had piled large quantities of cedar driftwood on its banks. The perspiring and panting mounts greedily drank its cool, clear water and then browsed or rested in the shady clumps of trees. About eighty miles distant, Laramie Peak towered above the western horizon.

Veteran of many western campaigns, Colonel Kearny could not be unaware of the importance of Fort Laramie as he viewed the outline of its rude structures. Thousands of emigrants rested here before proceeding on their toilsome journey to the Oregon country. The American Fur Company owned the station which, far removed from law and society, submitted to its absolute rule. Roads connected it with branches of the Missouri, and from the south it received supplies from the Spanish settlements. A vast interior drained by the Platte and even by the Missouri rendered to it its tribute in beaver pelts and in the dried beef, tongues, and robes of thousands of buffalo. The wilderness trails of French-Canadian trappers, Indians, mountaineers, and half-breeds crossed at Fort Laramie, and these alike acknowledged the commercial and in part the social domination of this western post.

The quadrangular structure built of sun-dried bricks was located on the west side of the Laramie River about a mile above its mouth. Its walls about two feet thick and fifteen feet high were surmounted by palisades. The dwellings lining the walls and forming part of them were covered with mud roofs. There were two entrances and the interior of the fort was divided into two areas by a wall, on one side of which the dragoons observed an open square measuring about twenty-five yards. Along the walls of this square were ranged store-rooms, offices, a carpenter's and a blacksmith's shop, and dwellings. At the mouth of the Laramie River stood Fort Platte, a rival fur-trading station, which competed for the honor of welcoming Colonel Kearny's command.

Fort Laramie swarmed with a mongrel and unkempt crowd of women and children whose jargon of mixed French, English, Spanish, and Indian sounded strange to Captain Cooke. "Here," he observed, "barbarism and a traditional or half civilization meet on neutral ground; but as a struggle, it is certain that the former has the best of it; although it has the disadvantage of being represented chiefly by females — both softening and impressible: but their credentials are ill-looks, dirty, and revoltingly coarse habits, etc. etc.; while the male representatives of civilization have the orthodox, although questionable aids of alcohol and gunpowder, avarice, lying, and lust."

"The struggle is at close quarters," he added. "Civilization, furnishing house and clothing; barbarism, children and fleas."

Meanwhile fleet Indian runners had been summoning the various Sioux bands to a council. For two days the Indians had been gazing with awe and wonder upon Colonel Kearny's army. They were impressed by the uniform appearance of the troops, their fine horses, their carbines, and their sabres. And, probably, envious eyes were cast upon the wagons bearing the camp supplies and provisions and quantities of presents and tobacco. If any of these Indians recalled the visits of Captain Bonneville in 1832 or of Lieutenant Frémont in 1842, or of the many emigrant parties later, they felt that Colonel Kearny's cavalry regiment was the greatest army that had ever appeared at the post.

Assembling on a plain between the two forts on June 16, 1845, this council perhaps reminded the veteran dragoon officers of similar scenes during their former western campaigns. About a thousand Sioux formed a large circle, in the center of which was the dragoon colonel with his officers and an escort. Two American flags and another supposed to be of Indian design fluttered in the breeze. Tall, fine-looking Sioux warriors with long hair and garish garbs, were seated on chairs and benches facing the dragoons, while to the rear squaws and frightened children shivered in the cold, crisp air.

The colonel's harangue was brief. He had been sent by their great father to march to the waters which flowed toward the setting sun and to open a road for the white men with their women, children, and cattle. The Sioux were forbidden to disturb them or their property under penalty of swift punishment. The greatest enemy among them, he warned the Sioux, was whiskey. "It is contrary to the wishes of your great father that whiskey should be brought here, and I advise you, whenever you find it in your country, no matter in whose possession, to spill it all on the ground. The ground may drink it without injury, but you cannot."

Bull Tail, the principal chief, in a brief reply promised obedience and then directed a short harangue at his followers. One of the braves likewise pledged the good behavior of his band and offered to carry Colonel Kearny's message through the Indian country. "The country is now smoother, and the clouds higher."

But more enjoyable to these Indians were Colonel Kearny's presents. A motley assortment was placed in the center of the circle and then distributed by seven warriors. Indian women chanted with joy when they grasped scarlet and blue cloth, beads, or red and green blankets; tobacco and knives were given; old men sang their delight and thanks; and young Sioux coxcombs admired themselves in cheap mirrors. Then, to the astonishment of the warriors and the terror of the Indian children, the roars of three shots from the mountain howitzers sounded down the Laramie valley after which the dragoons filed back to their camp.

A difficult march of nearly three hundred miles still lay before the dragoons. Leaving Company A at the post and disregarding the drizzling rain, Colonel Kearny on June 17th resumed the westward advance along the North Platte. They passed Warm Spring and encamped near Horseshoe Creek. The gloomy monotony of miles and miles of sagebrush was sometimes varied by the sight of straggling buffalo and antelope; hares and deer bounded over the stony ground; and the whirring flight of sage grouse startled the dragoons. The mornings were cool but at noon-days the horses glistened with sweat in the hot sun, and wagon fellies shrank and rattled in the dry, rare air. And when the long days ended, and after the evening meal had been cooked, and while the weather-beaten troops enjoyed their pipes or lounged about the mess-fires, they could perhaps listen to the howling of the wolves, the monotones of tree-frogs, or the quavering notes of owls.

Long marches brought the column to Deer Creek, where a little forest yielded two fat deer to the dragoon hunters. Only two grassy spots were seen during the march of twenty-seven miles on June 20th; and in the grim desolation of the landscape they saw but few buffalo. A grizzly bear was chased by Captain Moore; another dragoon shot a hare; a huge rattlesnake threatened some of the hunters; and Captain Cooke supped on a sage grouse. On the next day the column splashed through the shallow waters of the North Platte and emerged on its north bank.

Tired, hot, thirsty, and dusty, the dragoons were perhaps not very sensitive to the desolate majesty of the landscape on all sides. They filed around the red-rock precipices of the Red Buttes. The dry, parched desert, covered with rocks, clay, and the ever present stunted sagebrush, lay in the full glare of the June sun. And at mid-day its heat and light glinted from the plain white sand until there came, toward evening, the lengthening shadows of the Black Hills.

On Sunday, June 22, 1845, the travellers came to Independence Rock, a solitary mass of granite, and on this "Rocky Mountain album" they could still perhaps read the names of pioneers who, after inscribing their names, had passed by on their way to Oregon. Then the column shaped its course along the Sweetwater River and a few hours later was filing through Devil's Gate—a narrow fissure which the pen of the sensitive Father De Smet four years before had preferred to call "Heaven's Avenue".

Hunting parties were sent out daily, and once they surprised a flock of mountain sheep which bounded away in terror over the rocky precipices. Buffalo trophies were brought to the camp; and among the sagebushes a grizzly bear with three cubs growled defiance at the dragoons. Captain Cooke mentioned sage grouse, young antelope, hares, rabbits, and chattering magpies, while some of the soldiers drew fish from the clear waters of the riotous Sweetwater.

Rarer and rarer became the atmosphere as the column wound or scrambled along amid the wild and disordered scenery of this stream. On its alluvial banks the dragoon mounts, after browsing in the blue grass and white clover, found shade in the groves of cottonwood, beach, willow, aspen, and pine. Here and there roses and strawberries were about to bloom. But outside of this narrow strip they gazed upon the dreary wastes of the leaden-hued sagebrush. "It is a desert", described Captain Cooke, "which supports but little of life; in much of it the rare Indian, the antelope, or gaunt buffalo, appear as weary travellers, who seek where they may be at rest."

Thus amid picturesque scenes but also amid unromantic hardships the first regiment of the United States dragoons skirted along the devious Sweetwater toward its sources late in June, 1845. At noon the sun beat down with glaring heat, and then the stream rose several inches from the melting snows of distant hills. They witnessed magnificent thunder-storms, and were interested to see an old buffalo skull upon which the dry, rare atmosphere had perfectly preserved some of the tissues. But at night dragoons shivered about their camps or under their blankets. On the morning of Friday, the twenty-seventh of June, ice was found in the tents.

During the last three days of June the dragoons had progressed only twenty-seven miles through lofty solitudes where the sagebrush continued in its glory and where moss was disputing the possession of the hills with the prickly pear. They found willow bushes, a few antelopes, and some sage hens, while the horses recruited their strength in the fresh buffalo grass. On the 30th they came to the gap called South Pass, which formed the dividing ridge between the waters of the Pacific and the Atlantic.[173]

Here at an elevation of over seven thousand feet the soldiers gazed upon the snow-capped ranges of the Wind River and Sweetwater Mountains. They observed the rise of the Sweetwater River, which, meandering and hesitating, appeared undecided whether to turn toward the eastern or the western ocean. Kit Carson, Bonneville, Frémont, and thousands of pioneers had crossed this pass from the Mississippi Valley. Captain Cooke recorded that the pass lay in solitude, disturbed only by a sparrow and a killdeer, but Colonel Kearny was perhaps contemplating the oncoming caravans. He had overtaken on the Oregon Trail in this season about 850 men, 475 women, 1000 children, 7000 cattle, 400 horses and mules, and 460 wagons.[174] These, he must have felt, were to give added renown to the South Pass and to bear a part in the winning of the Far West.

XIII

FLYING CAMPS FROM SOUTH PASS TO FORT LEAVENWORTH[175]

Only about a day was spent at the South Pass; and then for nearly two weeks in July the regiment retraced its trail back to Fort Laramie. Between long marches the companies rested in spots covered with currants, gooseberries, strawberries, and clover, where the mosquitoes attacked the men until the cool evenings chilled the insects. On July 3, 1845, a group of Oregon emigrants appeared and on the next day and at their request Colonel Kearny fired the mountain howitzer to celebrate the day. Then the travels led over rocks and sands that glared with the July heat. "So much for the Fourth of July,— and a dry one!" concluded Captain Cooke.

On July 5th the soldiers rode twenty-eight miles over soil ground fine by the emigrant trains. They passed Devil's Gate, Independence Rock, and Hot Spring Gap; and drove buffalo from the good camping places but gladly followed their trails. They met Joel Palmer, who noted that not a few of the dragoons were ill. Colonel Kearny and others were seized with pains in the back, limbs, and head, suffering an attack of fever. A day of rest, however, brought them relief.

They found their old camping ground at Deer Creek converted into a cattle pen for the westerning emigrants. "We killed a buffalo this afternoon; and although scarcely a half-dozen have been seen from the column of march, since we struck the Platte, we have nearly subsisted on game; but one beef has been slaughtered since our departure from Fort Laramie. We had to cross the river to find grass for a camp: the sickness still prevails: it must be attributed to frequent wading for fuel, the hot suns, and the cold nights: the men were generally allowed to leave their cloaks at Laramie." After riding thirty miles on July 13th the troops were glad to encamp on the Laramie River several miles below its mouth. Baggage wagons were sent to the fort to bring supplies, and early the next day the procession was moving in a tortuous route toward a point which lay on the south fork of the Platte about one hundred and thirty miles due southward.

Skirting along the Chugwater River they came to some Cheyenne lodges. The Colonel addressed these Indians and then distributed liberal presents which were accepted by the patriarch of the band. The troopers were greatly interested in watching a group of Indian girls engaged in ornamenting a buffalo robe. But a certain red-haired bachelor captain wearing spectacles created a storm of merriment and laughter among the artless Indian maidens, who believed that the glasses enabled the wearer to gaze through opaque bodies!

The travellers passed two branches of Horse

Creek, the headwaters of Pole Creek, and then moved about forty miles down Crow Creek.[176] It was a land of wide spaces in which the heat waves quivered in the hot July air. Four hunters lost themselves and Colonel Kearny ordered the howitzers to be fired and rockets to be sent up at night.

Trackless wastes of hills, plains, and sandy ravines wearied the eyes of the soldiers, who saw only a few elk, a badger, three buffalo, and an antelope. Fuel became scarce and they cooked their meals over burning *bois de vache.* Far in the distance they admired Long's Peak towering above the other mountains and sometimes blending with the surrounding clouds. They filed past a grave marked by the white skeleton of a buffalo and a nearby heap of staring horse's skulls. For several miles the troops rode down the Cache la Poudre River and then forded the south fork of the Platte.

Urging their horses southward toward the Arkansas River the dragoons moved down the right bank of the South Platte and passed the ruins of some old adobe trading houses. The country was a prairie, desolate and devoid of life, over which the hot July winds blew from the south. Long's Peak formed an angle of sixty degrees, and Pike's Peak was beginning to rise in the southern horizon. "To-day", wrote a dragoon captain on July 23rd, "we still followed up Cherry Creek, or its dry sands; but towards noon, it came running to meet us; and there were the patronymic cherries,— or rather the bushes; and of the sort called choke-cherries. We are again encamped on it; but the highland is before us, and adorned, as the nearer hills, with pines; and with grass too; and the prospect is more homelike than any other, since we left the Little Blue, near the Missouri line."

Long, dreary marches were forgotten when the troops came to the grassy slopes, shrubs, and rosebushes of Cherry Creek; and there under firs and oaks they retreated from the heat and glare of the plains. In riding thirty-one miles on July 25th Colonel Kearny crossed the highland between the Arkansas and the South Platte rivers, passed Pike's Peak about fifteen miles distant, and in the evening pitched the dragoon tents on the banks of Fountain Creek, a stream skirted by groves, lush blue grass, and rushes.

For seventeen miles the route of the column lay along this stream. Then for sixteen miles the horses moved over plains of cactus and Spanish bayonet. Colonies of noisy prairie-dogs barked at them, but they saw no game. The troops were following a commercial highway over which gunpowder, whiskey, buffalo robes and tongues passed from trading-post to trading-post. Under a broiling sun the regiment marched twenty-two miles on July 27th along the Arkansas River; an equal distance was covered on the next day; and on the 29th the sight of a distant American flag indicated the presence of Bent's Fork.

Three shots from the post's swivel gun sounded a noisy salute to the regiment of dragoons, and the proprietors, Charles Bent and Ceran St. Vrain, extended to Colonel Kearny and his suite a hospitable welcome at the sally-port. The main body of the regiment, however, marched a mile or two lower down the stream and encamped on a grassy meadow. The soldiers observed a structure which a traveller described in 1839 as a parallelogram one hundred and fifty feet by one hundred feet, with adobe walls six or seven feet in thickness, and seventeen or eighteen feet in height.[177]

The commerce of the prairies gave to Bent's Fort, founded in about 1829, a far-flung renown which had been known to some of the dragoon officers for years. Conestoga wagons from Missouri — six hundred miles away — brought hardwares, calicoes, and dry goods, or continued on to Santa Fé. From the Mexican city of Taos, about one hundred and fifty miles distant, the post received sugar, flour, bread, and beans. Here peltries and buffalo robes gathered by roving bands of Camanches and Cheyennes were collected and then laboriously transported to St. Louis. Prairie travellers, such as Frémont and Farnham, had appreciated the character of this trade as well as the hospitality of the post.

For the first time in weeks the dragoon officers partook of an excellent dinner served in the hospitable quarters of Bent and St. Vrain. They were now able to observe the organization and equipment of this wilderness post. Ranged about the enclosure they saw the servants' quarters, the storehouses, the proprietor's lodgings, and the wagon house. The regiment had arrived with rations for only one day, and so the commissary at once began to search for the provisions which had been sent to Bent's Fort nearly two years before. The provisions, including the hard bread and the rice, were found in a state of perfect preservation.

A group of a dozen swarthy Mexicans who were on their way to trade with the Cheyennes were sharply questioned by the soldiers. Another Mexican had transported on his mule a bag of wheat from Taos; and on all sides they saw greasy Mexicans chattering in the Spanish tongue. "But", wrote a dragoon, "with English, French, and Indian additions and combinations, there is no slight confusion of tongues." With these the dragoons carried on a brisk trade to dispose of old worn-out horses for ponies and mules; and one officer, receiving a present of a pair of antelopes, purchased a mule and a cart for their transportation. Six hundred miles distant lay Fort Leavenworth.

For the first two weeks of August little of note took place as the regiment descended the Arkansas River. Colonel Kearny met a large band of Apaches — tall, handsome men, well-mounted and decorated with steel and silver ornaments. Another officer observed that no language could conceal an Indian's hunger. Arriving at Chouteau's Island on August 3, 1845,[178] Captain Cooke recalled that here he had helped to repel an attack of about four hundred Indians exactly sixteen years before.

An unromantic but not uninteresting routine appears in the story of these flying camps of the First United States Dragoons. A noisy trumpet at about four o'clock gave the summons for another day's work. Inspection followed, and then a "stable call" for the horses which gladly welcomed the prospect of removal to fresh grass. Steaming coffee, some unleavened cakes baked over night against a board or a spade, the usual boiled or fried buffalo beef, and occasionally a bit of fried pork, constituted the breakfasts on this march.

All baggage was then collected and packed in the wagons. In a quarter of an hour every trooper had bridled and saddled his mount and was prepared to travel many miles through the heat and dust of the plains. And as he shogged along there were hopes, fears, and disappointments when he looked forward for wood, grass, water, or shade. "In the heat of the day, if there be water," describes a captain, "we wait wearily, generally unshaded, about three-fourths of an hour, for horses to rest and take a luncheon of grass, and for the baggage to come up."

When Colonel Kearny camped his dusty comrades towards evening the horses were first tended. The canvas tents rose on the plain, and then followed an amusing and sometimes unpleasantly exciting scramble for fuel. The baggage was unloaded as soon as it arrived; the camp-fires were lit; perhaps a beef was slaughtered or some buffalo meat brought in by the hunters; provisions were issued; and the cooks prepared the evening meal.

The coarse and simple food was eaten with a relish. The soldiers then lounged about the camp, smoking their pipes or admiring the August sunsets or moonlight scenery, while merry jests and songs doubtless floated on the night air. Then the sentinels kept their lonely watches until relieved by another morning bugle.

Scenes familiar to some of the men greeted the detachment when on August 8th it struck the main route of the Santa Fé Trail, and passed occasional merchant caravans which gave out welcome news from the States. The troops hurried past the Cimarron Crossing, the Caches, Coon Creek, Pawnee Fork, and Ash Creek. Near Walnut Creek the dragoon hunters found a herd of nearly a thousand buffalo, and when the hunt was ended about 800 pounds of meat were added to the commissary wagon.

Through the clouds of dust and the scorching heat the perspiring men and animals pushed on. Spurred forward by the prospect of reaching home, they gave less notice to the old stations on the trace and soon crossed the Oregon Trail. The steeds too became animated with memories as the houses, stables, and green trees of Fort Leavenworth appeared to view. At dusk on August 24, 1845, the regiment filed through the gate and then formed at attention on the parade ground. There was a brief, eager suspense as the tired troops heard a few words of commendation from the dragoon colonel. "Great credit", he reported later, "is due to the officers and enlisted men who composed this command. They have all proven themselves what their ambition is to be — good soldiers."

XIV

WITH THE "ARMY OF THE WEST"[179]

New duties faced the first regiment of dragoons in 1846 after war was declared against Mexico on May 12th. Recruiting, the call for volunteers, the perfection of military plans, the appointment of officers, and the equipment of regiments constituted the varied activities of the military department of the government. Compelled for a time to abandon their former functions of western campaigning and frontier defense, the dragoons became absorbed in the greater tasks of sharing in a foreign war.

Three hundred dragoons became the nucleus for the "Army of the West" at Fort Leavenworth where the force was organized by Colonel Kearny and his dragoon officers. Responding to the call of the Governor of Missouri, company after company appeared at Fort Leavenworth during June of 1846 and were lettered in the order of arrival. Eight companies of mounted volunteers, two companies of artillery, and another company of St. Louis rangers completed the force. When the mustering in was completed by Captain James Allen and other officers the 1658 men were further prepared for the work of conquering the distant provinces of New Mexico and

California. Twelve six-pounders and four twelve-pound howitzers were added to the regimental equipment, the commissary wagons were loaded and scores of citizens came to see Colonel Kearny's army and to bid their sons, brothers, or fathers farewell.

Late in June, 1846, detached columns of the "Army of the West" began to leave Fort Leavenworth and to file across the plains toward Fort Bent, about five hundred and sixty miles distant, where the army was to reassemble. Two companies of volunteers and two of dragoons were despatched early to pursue some Mexican caravans bound for Santa Fé. About a hundred wagons freighted with army provisions followed, and then the annual merchant caravan of four hundred and fourteen wagons heavily loaded with dry goods for the Mexican markets began the journey. Next Colonel Kearny with detachments of dragoons and volunteers brought up the rear. Such a long line of march, in which the various detachments were many miles apart, promised to facilitate the procuring of fuel, water, and grass along the route.

Buoyant hopes and amusing scenes at first dispelled visions of the hardships and toil which lay before the troops. The army mules refused to advance and the dragoon horses needed much urging to pull the heavy brass six-pounders and the howitzers. "Amidst the fluttering of banners," wrote a volunteer, "the sounding of the bugles, the rattling of artillery, the clattering of sabres, and cooking utensils, some of the horses took fright and scampered, pell-mell, with rider and arms, over the wide prairie. Rider, arms and accoutrements, saddles and saddle-bags, tin-cups, and coffee-pots, were sometimes left far behind in the chase."

The forward movement of about forty-three miles brought the squadrons to the Santa Fé road and the familiar country witnessed by the dragoons was then in the full bloom of summer. They passed groves of oak, and near Stranger River the woods were skirted by hazel, plum trees, and grape vines; prairie chickens and quail whirred away in alarm. They crossed the Kansas River in boats; were attacked by swarms of mosquitoes and then consoled by a serenade of hooting owls; and in another day they pitched their tents on Wakarusa Creek.

Travelling many miles in advance of the main body of the army the dragoon detachments under Captains Moore and Burgwin and Lieutenant Noble rode past familiar stations on the Santa Fé road: 110 Mile Creek, Big John Spring, Diamond Spring, and Cottonwood Creek were again the principal camping places. When the Arkansas River was reached the distance measured two hundred and fifty-three miles from Fort Leavenworth. Far behind several companies under Colonel Kearny formed the rear of the marching line.

By this time the "Army of the West" stretched over a distance of perhaps one hundred miles on the Santa Fé road. An observer might have seen droves of cattle, company after company of volunteers, scores of wagons stocked with flour, pork, and salt, and well-mounted dragoons whose guns and sabres glinted in the sun. At other places there were noisy drivers whose wagons carried blankets, tents, and ammunition. And from early morning until late at night there could be heard the tramp of horses, the jingling of spurs, and the clanking of sabres.

A topographical engineer, however, records other scenes: the early morning dew was quickly dispelled by the broiling July sun; swarms of grasshoppers and crickets hummed in the prairie grass over which gaudy butterflies flitted among the flowers; gnats, horse-flies, and mosquitoes were allied to torment; rattlesnakes were killed in camp and the blow-flies infested the blankets; there were plover, crows, hawks, doves, thrushes, kingbirds, grouse, and screaming king-fishers; wallows and *bois de vache* indicated old buffalo haunts; and in the evening were heard the dismal howls of the sentinel wolves.

For three weeks the invading column skirted along the Arkansas River, and the detachments settled into the routine monotony of prairie travel. They passed over buffalo grass, sand hills, and barren ridges parched by the summer heat. Although the dragoons were far in advance of the main army, Lieutenant J. W. Abert, an engineer, described from day to day the scenes and experiences as the army marched along the trail. On Saturday, July 11th, the start was made at half past three in the morning and on the next day the encampment was near Cow Creek. On July 19th the stop was at Jackson Grove. Dusky wolves prowled about the camps and great herds of buffalo were common sights. Another soldier recorded that the men "killed plenty of buffalo, elk, antelope and deer, and brought in quantities of the grape plum, ripe and of excellent flavor."

"This day", writes Lieutenant Abert on July 20th, "we made a march of 31½ miles, passing along the top of a barren ridge, between one and two miles from the river. Nothing was to be seen but the curly buffalo grass, now parched by the summer's heat. The sun poured down his rays most lavishly; the men all dismounted and walked, in order to rest and to relieve themselves from the singular sensation produced by the heat. First one and then another of the party became ill, and several were seized with a severe vomiting."

The last days of July, 1846, enabled the regiment to advance about one hundred and seventy-five miles along the north bank of the Arkansas River, in an almost voiceless desolation of sagebrush, sand hills, and prairie. Camp rumors became more frequent when the enemy's country was finally invaded; the sick list increased daily; and many horses failed and were devoured by the wolves. Three Mexican spies were captured, and after having them conducted through the entire camp Colonel Kearny allowed them to retire to Santa Fé to report all that they had seen. Three dragoon detachments which had been vainly pursuing the Mexican traders rejoined the main army on July 30th.

When the army encamped near Bent's Fort late in July the dragoons could recall that exactly a year before they had visited the post. A respite of three days was allowed and a thousand horses closely guarded were turned loose to recuperate upon the prairies. Parkman, the historian, visited the post a few weeks later and recorded that for miles around the grass had been cropped by the horses of Colonel Kearny's army. "It seemed as if a swarm of locusts had invaded the country."[180] The Colonel fearing a scarcity of provisions reduced the soldier's daily ration to half a pound of flour and three-eighths of a pound of pork. "This", wrote a volunteer, "deprived us of coffee, sugar, salt, rice, &c., which had previously helped to make our provisions palatable. Now, our meals will consist of dough, if a simple mixture of flour and water deserves that name, fried in grease, or else what we used to call *flapjacks*, this being a thin variation of the aforesaid dough, poured into a hot frying-pan."

From the tops of the houses Mexican girls and Indian squaws watched Colonel Kearny's army depart for the conquest of Santa Fé while the American flag at the post was raised in salute to the passing columns. Leaving behind the sick teamsters, dragoons, and volunteers, the regiment moved up Timpas Creek and soon crossed Purgatory River. Disease, insufficient food, and the burning sun brought suffering enough. "Almost every day", said a private, "some dragoon or volunteer, trader, teamster, or amateur, who had set out upon the expedition buoyant with life and flattered with hopes of future usefulness, actuated by a laudable desire to serve his country, found a grave on the solitary plains."

The trail of the regiment was marked by about fifteen camps on the way from Bent's Fort to Santa Fé. Camp 36 on August 7 was at an altitude of 7700 feet. On the next day Captain Sumner drilled the dragoons and made an imposing show for the volunteers. On the 11th the dragoons led the army across valleys and variegated scenes for a distance of thirty-two miles and then encamped on the Ocate River. A few days later messengers arrived from Fort Leavenworth bringing newspapers, letters, and the report that Colonel Kearny had been promoted to the rank of a brigadier general on June 30th.

Descending the valley of Moro (now Coyote) Creek the soldiers beheld the first settlements seen on a march of 775 miles. Mistaking the pine stakes of a distant corral for Mexicans, the dragoons were sadly disappointed not to enjoy a fight or a chase. American residents then visited the troops and a refugee from Santa Fé warned the dragoon commander that General Manuel Armijo was fortifying a pass fifteen miles from that city. On July 15th the soldiers entered the little village of Vegas (Las Vegas) and heard of a Mexican force of six hundred men who were guarding a pass two miles distant. The trumpeters sounded "to horse", the colors were unfurled, the drooping nags revived, and then the gorge was charged. But not a person was to be seen and the soldiers, again disappointed, resumed the monotonous march toward Santa Fé.

Thus day after day rumor and exaggeration came into the American camp, and the reports increased as the column moved forward. The soldiery heard that two thousand Mexicans were guarding the pass and later a messenger declared that "Armijo and his troops have gone to hell, and the Cañon is all clear." On August 17th the command halted at Pecos, an ancient village formerly fortified, which was about thirty miles from Santa Fé. New horses and mules were ordered for the artillery and the entire army braced itself for the final dash to the Mexican city.

To the volunteers and the dragoons accustomed for weeks to the dreary march across the plains the sight of the Mexican settlements must have been refreshing. Corn fields and gardens, droves of swine, herds of cattle, and flocks of sheep and goats evidenced the prosperity among the natives. As the army passed village after village, men, women, boys, and girls came to the regiment to sell vegetables, bread, milk, cheese, fruits, pepper, and chickens. In a short time these natives had drained most of the specie from the pockets of the American soldiers.

All opposition to the advance of the army vanished as the columns neared Santa Fé and promises of a friendly reception came from the acting governor, Juan B. Vigil. On August 18, 1846, General Kearny's troops entered the city; the American flag was raised; and a salute of thirteen guns echoed down the canyon. On the next day General Kearny assembled the people and announced to them that they were now living under the American rule. Thus without firing a shot, and after a fifty days' march of nearly nine hundred miles, an extensive province containing perhaps 100,000 people passed into the possession of the United States.

XV

THE CAMPAIGN TO CALIFORNIA

CALIFORNIA next became the goal of General Kearny in his western campaigns. Late in 1846 he commenced his thousand-mile march from Santa Fé to San Diego for the purpose of capturing another province.[181] His force of about a hundred dragoons, detached from the "Army of the West", coöperated with the American force on the Pacific coast and thereby added another chapter of campaigns to the history of the First Regiment of United States Dragoons.

After setting up the machinery of the new American government and making several excursions from Santa Fé to distant parts of the province, on September 25, 1846, General Kearny with three hundred dragoons began the long journey to California. The whole command was mounted on mules, while ox-teams dragged the heavy mountain howitzers and the ammunition and supply wagons. Lieutenant Emory, whose detachment of topographical engineers accompanied the dragoons, kept a daily journal of the scenery, the geology, the meteorology, and the events along the course.

The Rio Grande River having been reached in about three days, General Kearny for over two weeks followed this twisting stream for a distance of about two hundred and twenty miles. At the little Mexican village of Zandia the troops engaged in a brisk trade in horses; and at Albuquerque Lieutenant Emory found the wife of Governor Manuel Armijo sitting on an ottoman, smoking. Reports of Navajo uprisings came to the camp; straggling villages were passed; and the troops flushed myriads of brant, geese, and crane in their daily descent of the stream.

Ten miles below Socorro the dragoon column met Kit Carson returning from California bearing despatches to Washington which described the recent conquest of that province by Frémont and Commodore Stockton. "The general told him", wrote a dragoon captain, "he would relieve him of all responsibility, and place the mail in the hands of a safe person, to carry it on; he finally consented, and turned his face to the west again, just as he was on the eve of entering the settlements, after his arduous trip, and when he had set his hopes on seeing his family. It requires a brave man to give up his private feelings thus for the public good; but Carson is one such! honor to him for it!"

The General then issued an order to reduce the command to one hundred men, and companies B, G, and I were led back to Santa Fé. The best wagons and the finest teams were surrendered for the toilsome trip to the Far West. Thomas Fitzpatrick then left for Washington and Carson retraced his steps to California. Dragoon comrades parted here, little knowing that some would never meet again and that the military careers of some would end with honor in California, New Mexico, or at Cerro Gordo.

The mule teams toiled down the pathless valley of the Rio Grande dragging the wagons and the two howitzers. Carson insisted that the command could not reach Los Angeles in four months. Then after the command encamped, a messenger was sent to order Major Sumner to send back pack saddles and to return for the horses. "Marched at a quarter before 9," wrote a dragoon on October 14th, "and got off pretty well, as we had almost a pack for every person; all were busy to the hour of starting, from the general down; but our pack-saddles were bad and our lash ropes worse; with a few cases of kicking and no accidents, we made our march down the river, (17 miles,)".

Forsaking the Rio Grande River at last, the detachment veered toward the southwest and moved over a tortuous course of valleys, mountains, streams, and stunted timber. Marches began at eight in the morning and throughout the day Kit Carson guided the mules and the howitzer teams. Apaches came to camp, but a dragoon officer remarked that "trading mules is dull work." On October 20, 1846, General Kearny's force arrived at the banks of the Gila River.

For a month the little detachment travelled down the valley of this stream for a distance of about four hundred and fifty miles. The routes were difficult in the extreme: the mules stumbled up and down the ascents on insecure footings; deep gullies gashed the banks of the stream; and the troops wound through canyons, over mountains, and then passed under overhanging cliffs. "The whole days journey", wrote Lieutenant Emory on November 8th, "was through a cañyon, and the river was crossed twelve or fifteen times. The sand was deep, and occasionally the trail was much obstructed by pebbles of paving-stone. The willow grew so densely in many places as to stop our progress, and oblige us to look for spots less thickly overgrown, through which we could break."

Soldiers looked upon the drear remains of old Indian villages. The mules dragging the howitzers mounted on wheels ten feet in circumference were failing fast. Apaches visited the dragoon camps to barter, to beg, and to steal. Kit Carson remarked that he "would not trust one of them." The troops chased wild hogs, feasted on teal and quail, flushed swarms of geese and turkeys, and now and then brought down mountain sheep and deer. Tarantulas, scorgions, and lizards lurked among the rocks and the sagebrush. Mirages further distorted the landscape of the rugged horizon. Thus day by day and amid such scenes the column moved toward the West.

Arriving at the junction of the Gila and the Colorado rivers on about November 22nd, General Kearny discovered the fresh tracks of horses, and soon a squad of troops found a party of Mexicans with four or five hundred horses on their way to Sonora. From the Mexicans were purchased a number of wild horses which were intended to replace the old worn mounts destined soon to die on the desert. On November 25th the troops, still guided by Kit Carson, forded the chilly waters of the Colorado, and emerged in what is now the State of California.

Barrenness and desolation reigned supreme throughout the miles travelled in the next week. Day after day the dragoon horses and mules waded through sands covered with soft mussel shells and the vegetation of the desert. Some of the worn and jaded animals were left behind to die of thirst and hunger. On a hot November day the animals inflated with water and rushes gave way by scores. "It was a feast day for the wolves, which followed in packs close on our tract, seizing our deserted brutes and making the air resound with their howls as they battled for the carcasses."

But the ragged blue-coats pushed on though the sharp thorns had reduced the soldiers to almost bare legs. The command on November 30th was over eighteen hundred miles from Fort Leavenworth; rations were exhausted and an entire horse was consumed with great relish. "Our men were inspected to-day," wrote Captain Johnston. "Poor fellows! they are well nigh naked — some of them barefoot — a sorry looking set. A dandy would think that, in those swarthy, sun-burnt faces, a lover of his country will see no signs of quailing."

Hungry and exhausted the force arrived at Warner's ranch on December 2, 1846; and there seven men at a single meal ate a fat, full grown sheep. Fifteen miles beyond, General Kearny came to San Isabel, the ranch of an Englishman named Edward Stokes, who reported that San Diego was in the possession of Commodore Stockton's naval force. On the 5th the dragoons came to Santa Maria, another ranch, where they were met by a detachment of thirty-nine men from San Diego. Nine miles distant, reported these men, a force of Mexicans was encamped; and so Lieutenant Hammond's party was sent ahead to reconnoitre.

In a short time the enemy was discovered and located at San Pascual, an old Indian village. At about two o'clock on the morning of December 6, 1846, the call to horse was sounded, and a motley column of about one hundred and sixty men moved toward the camp of Captain Andrés Pico. A drizzling rain had soaked the men's clothing, and the troops shivered in the cold. Mules and horses were stiff and worn from the long journey, or were unbroken and unmanageable. Captain Johnston's twelve troops formed the advance guard, while the forces of Captain Moore, Lieutenant Hammond, and Captains Archibald H. Gillespie and Gibson followed. Farther in the rear two howitzers, a field piece, and the baggage carts jolted over the uneven ground.

A sharp engagement of about ten minutes ensued. After the first musket fire came a fight at close range. "It was sabre against lance — sabres and clubbed guns in the hands of dragoons and volunteers mounted on stupid mules or half-broken horses against lances, the enemy's favorite weapons, in the hands of the world's most skilful horsemen." When the two howitzers were brought up the enemy began to flee, but the dragoons could not follow up the pursuit. The mules dragging one of the howitzers took sudden flight and dashed wildly toward the retreating enemy who soon captured the man in charge of the gun.

About eighteen men were killed and about the same number were wounded. Captain Johnston, who just a week before had declared that the men "will be ready for their hour when it comes", was killed by a rifle-ball.[182] A Mexican lance thrust ended the life of Captain Moore, and Lieutenant Hammond likewise died from the effects of such a Mexican weapon. General Kearny was wounded in two places, and Captain Gibson in three places. Others received from two to ten lance wounds, mostly when unhorsed and incapable of resistance.

That night the Americans encamped on the battle ground of San Pascual.[183] "When night closed in," wrote a lieutenant, "the bodies of the dead were buried under a willow to the east of our camp, with no other accompaniment than the howling of myriads of wolves, attracted by the smell. Thus were put to rest together, and forever, a band of brave and heroic men. The long march of 2,000 miles had brought our little command, both officers and men to know each other well. Community of hardships, dangers, and privations, had produced relations of mutual regard which caused their loss to sink deeply in our memories."

Sleep was impossible that night, in spite of the fatigues of the day. The night air was cold and damp and the ground was covered with cacti. The thoughts of Sergeant Thomas Cox, who was already in the agonies of death, must have gone back to Fort Leavenworth where a few months before he had left his bride. Provisions were exhausted, mules were worn out, horses were dead, and the dragoons, reduced in numbers, were ragged, exhausted, and emaciated. "Day dawned on the most tattered and ill-fed detachment of men that ever the United States mustered under her colors."

The depleted command moved on, bearing the wounded in ambulances which grated on the ground. Arriving at the San Bernardo ranch the soldiers watered their horses and killed some chickens for their sick comrades. In a skirmish a squad of soldiers drove thirty or forty Mexicans from a hill where they had been disputing General Kearny's advance. In this movement the Americans lost their cattle and the next day were compelled to kill the fattest mules for meat. Fearing to advance further, General Kearny halted; and on the night of December 8, 1846, Lieutenant Beale, Kit Carson, and an Indian, at the risk of their lives volunteered to go to San Diego, twenty-nine miles distant, to secure reinforcements.

Two days later the Mexicans attempted to stampede the dragoon animals by driving towards them a band of wild horses. The soldiers, however, dexterously turned off the animals, killing two or three of the fattest on which the command feasted. That night Lieutenant Gray arrived from San Diego with one hundred tars and eighty marines who, for the rest of the night distributed provisions and clothing to the ragged and hungry dragoons.

Continuing the march General Kearny appropriated a herd of cattle abandoned by the enemy. Elsewhere the troops found and confiscated sheep, goats, turkeys, chickens, and casks of wine. On December 12, 1846, they came in view of the adobe houses at San Diego and the post which overlooked the surrounding wastes. To the west lay the Pacific Ocean and along a promontory the troops observed the frigate "Congress" and the sloop "Portsmouth". Under torrents of rain the dragoons finished their march of nineteen hundred miles from Fort Leavenworth.

Preparations for the final conquest of the southern part of California soon followed. On December 29, 1846, a conglomerate regiment consisting of about sixty dragoons, sailors, marines, and volunteers — in all 561 men — left San Diego. The regiment passed ranches and one mission after another without resistance, until the river San Gabriel was reached on January 8, 1847, when a shower of grape and round shot splashed around the troops as they crossed the stream. A shot from a field gun thereupon shattered the best gun of the Californians, who retreated among the nearby hills.

When morning came the enemy was nowhere to be seen. The march was again continued; once more the troops halted to scatter the Mexican force by rounds of grape shot from the American artillery. On the 10th General Kearny, Commodore Stockton, and Captain Archibald Gillespie entered Los Angeles. Three days later the dragoons saw the signing of a treaty of submission which ended their share in the conquest of the province of California.[184]

XVI

MAJOR WOODS' VISIT TO THE RED RIVER OF THE NORTH

A MARCH of about five hundred miles across the present States of Minnesota and North Dakota northwestwardly from Fort Snelling to Pembina on the Red River of the North constituted the activities of a company of dragoons in the summer of 1849.[185] Major Samuel Woods in command of about forty dragoons had been directed to make a special examination of the Red River of the North. His orders directed him to march as far north as the boundary of the United States, to advise with respect to the best location of a military post, and to collect information on the health, subsistence, and the facilities of building and access. "You will also collect and report", ran the Adjutant General's instructions, "all the information you can obtain of the number, character and habits of the Indians in that region, their means of subsistence, their disposition towards the United States, and the influence exerted on them by the Hudson's Bay Company by trade, presents or otherwise."

Five days of marching along the east bank of the Mississippi for a distance of seventy-seven miles brought the detachment to the Sauk Rapids on June 11th.[186] Rain fell every day, and men and horses splashed through the mud. The heavy wagons and the mountain howitzer tested the strength of the horses and tried the patience of the drivers. On the next day the dragoons began to cross the Mississippi River, but on account of the incessant rain and the high winds they did not complete their passage until the following day.

Ascending the Sauk River valley[187] the soldiers followed the Red River trail toward the southwest. The thickly matted turf saturated with rains compelled slow marching. "The river", described Major Woods, "was much swollen by the heavy rains, and was wide and deep. We launched our ponton-wagon-beds and crossed it, and encamped on the western bank. Between this and Coldwater creek we had to make two bridges, and mired down over the most of the way, going only five miles in two days; many little places detaining us for hours, and requiring almost the constant labor of our men in mud and water."

The prairies in the full bloom of summer were broken here and there by patches of timber and by numberless clear streams. Day after day the route continued in a northwesterly direction along a chain of lakes. Major Woods rested his horses four days and repaired broken chains and wagons. "The horse-fly attacked our horses here, and continued for two days indescribably fierce, and then disappeared." Near a sheet of water during an electric storm a flash of lightning struck Lieutenant J. W. T. Gardiner's tent and the accident suggested the name "Lightning Lake". These lakes, framed by timber and by quantities of rushes, teemed with bass and perch, and some of the soldiers with a seine caught more than the command could consume.

Drenching rains fell during the four days encampment on "Bear Lake"[188] and thunder storms burst forth in such smashing explosions that soldiers left their tents in terror. At other times they could gaze toward the dark stretches of woods through which from time to time flashes of silent heat lightning gleamed from afar. Stately swans gazed at these unbidden visitors to their haunts; mosquitoes sometimes attacked the camp; and possibly the air was noisy with the humming of insects and the chorus of frogs.

"We resumed our march on the 6th of July", records the leader of this expedition. Crossing a broken prairie, the troops came to Chippewa River near which an elk crossed their path. At "Elbow Lake"[189] a band of fifty Chippewa hunters met them, received tobacco presents, and then gave the soldiers a war dance. Five miles beyond they met the advance train of about twenty-five Red River carts in charge of a man from the Red River settlement. These carts were freighted with pemmican and peltries and were on their way to St. Paul and Galena. There goods were purchased and transported to Pembina, where the traders attempted to smuggle the goods into the English settlements.

Soon afterward the squadron met Mr. Norman W. Kittson, the agent of "Chotian June & Co." established at Pembina. His sixty-five carts were loaded with the furs of a season's business.

The dragoons next crossed the Red River of the North, travelling nearly due northwest. On the west bank Major Woods made a selection of a site for a military post.[190] It was a fertile prairie region abounding in luxuriant grass while nearby were forests of elm, oak, cottonwood, ash, and maple. The site was marked by an upright post on which was indicated the distance of one hundred and sixty-three miles to Sauk Rapids. On July 15, 1849, the detachment resumed its journey down the Red River Valley.

About eighty-eight miles of marching in the next six days carried the explorers through pleasant landscapes: marshes, long stretches of luxuriant prairies and the forest-shadowed valleys of the Wild Rice, Sheyenne, Rush, and Elm rivers. But ever since their departure from the Mississippi swarms of mosquitoes had increased in numbers and ferocity, "and had been anathematized, as we thought, sufficiently for their perdition; but now they choked down every expression that would consign them to the shades."

Torrents of rain continued to fall and the detachment continued to be visited by "countless numbers of these winged insects that contemn the displeasure, and sing cheerily over the tortures of their victims." The soldiers ferried rivers, waded through the water-covered prairies, encamped on the south branch of Goose River, and there chased a herd of buffalo, killing several. About one hundred miles to the northward lay the Pembina settlement.

Day after day these dragoons crossed streams — Turtle River, Park River, Tongue River, and many other nameless branches of the Red River of the North.[191] Major Woods with a soldier's eye examined an old battle-ground of the Sioux and Chippewas. From morning till night the soldiers battled against mosquitoes and in the evening the wind drove them against the tents with a sound like that of falling rain. "Our horses were almost exhausted. The constant hard pulling, the ravages of mosquitoes, and not being able to feed in quiet, were too much for them." On the first day of August the command joyfully arrived at Pembina near the junction of the Red and the Pembina rivers.

"Pembina is the natural gate", observed Major Woods, "through which all intercourse between the U. S. and the Hudson Bay territories will find its passage." Joe Rolette, a fur trader left in charge of Kittson's establishment, welcomed the dragoon force and tendered the use of his houses. But to these soldiers the spot seemed uninviting: instead of a village they saw nothing but Kittson's trading-place and a few straggling Indian and half-breed lodges. A mile distant Major Woods saw the two-story Chippewa schoolhouse, the chapel, the out-houses, and the luxuriant garden of G. A. Belcourt, the Catholic missionary in the Pembina district.

Major Woods visited and marked the 49th parallel, setting up a post bearing the date "*August* 14, 1849." In this month hundreds of Chippewas began to return from their summer hunts. The major gave an audience to this staring multitude, the leaders of which replied to the dragoon commander's compliments. Then upon his advice "Green Feather", "End of the Current", and "Long Legs", were selected as chiefs and each given a medal. After this the Indians fired a salute to their new authorities and the dragoons replied with several discharges from the mountain howitzer.

Major Woods found in the Pembina district about one thousand half-breeds, and in August about one hundred of their hunters visited him. They complained of the competition of the Hudson's Bay Company, and requested that better means of communication be established with the States and that a military post be established among them. The dragoon commander urged them to organize their band, to elect a council, and vest it with power to enforce order and harmony. Nine men were chosen to act as a committee for the government of the half-breed population in the United States.

To such dragoon officers as Lieutenants Gardiner, A. D. Nelson, Captain John Pope, and Dr. Sykes these weeks among the half-breeds afforded interesting pictures. They possessed a few hogs, 1500 cattle, 300 work horses, 150 horses for the chase, 300 oxen, and 600 carts. The census of 1850 showed that the population of 1116 was predominantly French-

Canadian, and nearly all the able-bodied men gave their occupations as that of a hunter.[192]

Here the dragoon officers learned more about the great spring and fall hunts when thousands of buffalo were slain. From three to five hundred hunters mounted on fine horses were accompanied by their priest and by their wives and children and other helpers whose carts creaked and rattled over the plains. Now and then a badger would be driven to his hole or a gray wolf chased away. At night the corral was formed, the tents raised, the camp-fires made, and the horses tended. The women boiled the water, fried pemmican, cooked potatoes, and baked the bread. Then came the posting of the guard, the evening pipes, and rest before the next day's hunt.

These half-breeds, the soldiers observed, were a mild, generous, well-mannered people. "The greater number", wrote their indulgent priest, "are no friends of labor." Indeed, in the summer evenings at St. Vincent parish in Pembina the dimly lighted log-houses of these gay folk resounded with merriment. And many were the reels, jigs, and quadrilles shuffled to the shrieks from trembling strings of overworked fiddles. Nor were the younger couples alone in the fun, for here all joined, unmindful of the next day's toil or the hardships of the chase.[193]

Major Woods examined the possible military advantages of the region at Pembina. Lieutenant Nelson in purchasing forage at Fort Garry, sixty miles below Pembina, found there a force of about one hundred pensioners of the British army. The decision of the dragoon officers was to advise against the erection of a post at Pembina.

When the dragoons left Pembina on August 26th a salute was fired in their honor by the half-breeds. The detachment returned by the old cart road east of the Red River of the North, marching over the four hundred and seventy-one miles at the rate of over twenty miles daily. Frosts after September 1st affected the grass, and the horses weakened until forage was secured at the Sauk Rapids. "We were three months and twelve days out," reported Major Woods, "travelled nearly a thousand miles without forage (with the exception of a few days), had the worst of roads, rivers to swim almost daily, and the unceasing annoyance of mosquitoes, and lost but one horse and one mule. The horse got away and could not be recovered; the mule died."

XVII

SOLDIER LIFE AT OLD FORT LEAVENWORTH

Brief as they are the staid *Post Records* of the Fort Leavenworth of sixty-five to seventy-five years ago reveal some of the sorrows and tragedies at this western post. Mindful of the virtuous reputation of his officers, the commandant caused a severe reprimand to be sent to Captain Eustace Trenor of the First Dragoons; and the record for November 6, 1849, relumes a bit of old regimental scandal about a former lieutenant of this regiment. Captain Boone's letter of July 13, 1848, reports the death of the commandant of the post, Lieutenant Colonel Wharton, "who departed this life at this place at 12 o'clock last night". In November, 1849, the name of Mathias S. Baker heads a mournful list of ten soldiers reported dead.[194]

Order number 89 of May 14, 1849, forbids all persons to visit the pest-house; Captain Grier is ordered to preside at a court-martial; and two privates found guilty of being drunk while on the sick list are fined and sentenced to perform twenty extra hours of police duty. Another private was found guilty of providing spirituous liquors to prisoners;

and privates James O'Brien and Baldwin, both dragoons, were found too drunk to attend drill.[195]

One may read, too, of the irregular mails from St. Louis to the fort; of the granting of leaves of absences; of resignations; of frequent desertions; of promotions. Side excursions of sergeants' details are made to arrest deserters; a dragoon command under Captain R. T. Ewell departs for Santa Fé; there is a fatal stabbing affray, and a soldier is killed who did not answer the sentinel's challenge; soldiers return to the fort with face and hands poisoned on the long marches over the plains. In July, 1850, recruits to the number of three hundred and twenty-nine arrive at the fort bringing the cholera plague. One corpse was landed from the steamer "St. Paul", and a few days later seven more soldiers sickened and died. "No Doctor can be hired here", reported Captain Lovell, "and Asst. Surg. Langworthy is the only Medical Officer with the command: and as he is to be stationed [at] the new Post on the Arkansas, I take it for granted that another Surgeon will be ordered to join the detachment bound for Santa Fe."[196]

A soldier's routine of duties appears in an order of January 26, 1850. Sleep was broken by the reveille at daybreak and fifteen minutes later was followed by the stable call. Then came the sick call at 7:10, and the call to breakfast twenty minutes thereafter. Then came fatigue call, guard mounting, and orderly call. The dinner call came at 12 M., fatigue call again at 1 P. M., and the stable call at

1:30. Retreat at sunset. Tattoo at 9:00 P. M. meant rest for the troops — except for the sentinels who kept the long winter night watches.[197]

Complaint came from Colonel Sumner in 1851 regarding the high prices paid for stores and subsistence for the post. Greater use, he urged, should be made of the 1400 acre farm at the post. "The St. Louis prices of corn and Oats are about 50 cts. a bushel," he writes in January, 1851, "and timothy hay 12 or 15 dolls. a ton; the corn and oats can be raised at this farm at 20 cts. per bushel *or less,* and the hay will cost nothing but the making of it (say two dollars a ton) as we have 600 acres of timothy grass. We can raise, after this year 10,000 bushels of wheat, and the difference between St. Louis prices and the expense of raising it, would be several thousand dollars. We can reasonably reckon upon raising this year, from 23 to 25,000 bushels of corn 12000 bushels of oats, and over 600 tons of timothy hay. The difference between white, and Indian labor, is very great, and except for herdsmen and the like, it would be better economy to employ white men. If the object is, in part, to instruct Indians in agriculture, it would seem to be unnecessary here, as we are surrounded by Mission, and Manual labor scholls [*sic*]. It does not seem to be contemplated that any stock (Beef and Pork) will be raised; this would be very profitable and would not interfere with the tillage of the farm. Our Beef now costs over 5, and Pork $5 a hundred, both can be raised here for less than $2 a hundred. The animals would be herded on the praries near us, during the summer, and brought upon the farm in the winter, where the fodder, from the immense grain fields, would subsist a great number of them."[198]

At this post and at others conflicts between the military and the civil population arose only too often. In 1846 Captain Wharton established a post on Table Creek where he learned that "several persons have squatted on it by some doubtless with the intention of becoming dealers in Whiskey to the annoyance of the Garrison".[199] A few years later Colonel Sumner was protesting that a justice of the county court of Platte at Weston, Missouri, was discharging soldiers on frivolous and illegal pretenses. The justice held that some soldiers were not United States citizens when they enlisted, that others had been enlisted for mounted service but had been ordered to serve on foot, that soldiers were intoxicated when recruited, that their wives were not properly provided for at the post, and finally that they had been converted into day laborers at the fort. "The discharges", concluded the Colonel, "being constantly granted for the above causes, are rapidly reducing the strength of the companies at this post, and unless prompt measures are taken in the matter, men enough will not be left to furnish a guard for the public property."[200]

Traders, pioneer settlers, and western emigrants in visiting or in passing Fort Leavenworth not infrequently defied the military authorities or assumed toward them a patronizing familiarity. The pioneer travelling in wide spaces and performing unaided his part in the conquest of the new West sometimes knew little or cared little about courts, laws, officials, and respect for military authorities. It must have been a not dissimilar type which James Russell Lowell sympathetically but rather truthfully described as:[201]

> This brown-fisted rough, this shirt-sleeved Cid,
> This backwoods Charlemagne of Empires new,
> Who meeting Caesar's self would slap his back,
> Call him "Old Horse" and challenge to a drink.

Privates were paid at the rate of eight dollars per month, although of this amount one dollar was retained each month by the paymaster. Wonders were accomplished with these few dollars in purchasing delicacies for the mess tables, and the Missouri hucksters carried on a flourishing business among the soldiery. Too often, however, these dollars were spent at "Whiskey Point", a not too respectable ale-house located a mile above the fort and on the opposite side of the Missouri River. There anything could be traded for whiskey; and not infrequently a soldier would trade his overcoat and then suffer greatly during some of the winter marches over the snow-covered plains.[202]

Courts-martial and punishments were frequent enough in the summer of 1849. Corporal John W. Corser was guilty of highly "unsoldierlike conduct" for exclaiming to Captain Perry: "Damn you sir, I did answer to my name." Another trooper was drunk on parade, with clothes and equipment in bad order, and for fifteen days was compelled to live in a cell on bread and water. Privates O'Brien and Baldwin were fined five dollars for being absent without leave. Another sentence compelled a luckless soldier to walk in front of the guard house and to carry a weight of thirty pounds two out of every three hours.[203] A year later, in May, 1850, a culprit might have been seen carrying two weights or balls and resting only one hour for each meal between reveille and tattoo.[204]

But other and more welcome glimpses of the post and its activities as they appeared about sixty-five years ago are preserved in old records and reminiscences. For months late in 1849 a company of recruits from Carlisle, Pennsylvania, had been on the way to Fort Leavenworth, but not until Christmas day did the flag and the buildings loom into view. Edward Brydon, the Irish trumpeter, sounded the retreat, the ranks were closed, the roll was called, and in good order the troops marched in front of Colonel Sumner's quarters. After standing at attention and hearing their names checked off, the recruits were marched to their quarters.[205]

Hungry as they were these travel-tired troops did not gormandize that evening at the Christmas dinner. Filing into the dining-room, they found a table piled high with bread and boiled pork cut in slices. Each man passed his tin-cup to be filled from a big kettle of steaming coffee. "The British deserter", wrote a guest at this rude feast, "had been supplied with whiskey since his arrival, and he officiated in handing each man his ration, taking a slice of pork, putting it on a slice of bread and handing it to the nearest man — a Christmas dinner long to be remembered.''[206]

Troop K had a goodly number of scholars, some good singers, and a smattering of theatrical talent. A Thespian Society was organized, and once a week during February and March in 1850 men like Kimball, Glennon, Rogers, Miller, Hill, O'Shea, and ''Little'' Duffy gave performances in the dining-room. Nor did the officers and ladies at the post fail to attend some of these exhibitions and entertainments.[207]

It is not difficult to fancy the scenes in the privates' barracks during the long winter evenings of about sixty-five years ago. Before the crackling log-fires were such privates as Talbot, Worref, McKenzie, and Fox — all veterans of the Mexican War. There was Miller, an Englishman, who had been a teacher and was master of several languages. O'Shea, a graduate of Dublin University, was the champion boxer of the garrison. Congenial companionships, practical jokes, reading in the post library, and the twice-told tales of comrades in arms — such constituted some of the more pleasant winter evening scenes at the post.[208]

But elsewhere, too, there were not lacking scenes of merriment and good fellowship. A large two-story frame structure with front and back porches and a stone basement contained the quarters of the unmarried officers and was rightly named ''Bedlam". " 'Twas here", wrote an old dragoon, "they fought their battles o'er, from West Point and the girls they left behind them, through the swamps of Florida, the wilds of Texas, over the great plains, the mountains, on the Pacific Slope and the fields of Mexico. 'Twas here they met after tedious campaigns, recounted their triumphs, disappointments and hardships; through heat, cold, hunger and disease — and now the feast, if not always of reason, at least the flow of soul — and other things."[209]

The simple features and homely charms of this old Missouri River post have disappeared in the modern fort with its commodious barracks, the stately War College, the huge cavalry stables, the motion-picture building, the Y. M. C. A. quarters, and the great disciplinary barracks containing their numbered inmates and frowningly overlooking the Missouri River. But the old *Post Records* are still there and yield their meager history; while the names of Kearney Avenue, Sumner Place, and Buford Avenue seem to preserve the memories of soldiers who knew the fort when the West was still wild.

One day in the spring of 1915 the writer was examining the old *Post Records* in the summary court-martial room at Fort Leavenworth. An officer, presumably a captain of infantry, entered, followed by a boyish-looking private. The officer sat down, but the soldier stood rigidly at attention. "You are charged", he read, "with having been absent from drill in May two weeks ago. Are you guilty or not guilty?" The private confessed guilt and explained that he had been out with the "bunch" and had crossed over into Missouri. There the soldiers had secured liquor, and he had become too intoxicated to perform his military duties the following day.

This scene brought back visions of Old Fort Leavenworth — the Old Fort Leavenworth of seventy-five years ago.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

CAPTAIN BOONE'S JOURNAL OF AN EXPEDITION OVER THE WESTERN PRAIRIES

INTRODUCTION

THE documents printed below are in the office of the Adjutant General of the United States Army at Washington. All the material is based upon photostat prints secured by The State Historical Society of Iowa and consists of the following documents: (1) a map illustrating the route of the dragoons; (2) Brigadier General Zachary Taylor's letter of transmittal; (3) Captain Boone's report; and (4) Captain Boone's *Journal*. The map is not reproduced in this appendix and drawings and illustrations in the body of the *Journal* are merely indicated in the printed text.

Nathan Boone, the author of the *Journal*, was born in Kentucky in 1782 and emigrated with his father, Daniel Boone, to Missouri. In 1812 President Madison appointed him captain of mounted rangers, a company of Missouri frontiersmen, and in the next year he rose to the rank of major. In 1832 he became captain in the regiment of Mounted Rangers. Afterward he served as captain and then as major in the First Regiment of United States

Dragoons. He became lieutenant colonel of the Second Regiment of United States Dragoons on July 25, 1850, resigning three years later. He died on June 12, 1857.

ZACHARY TAYLOR'S LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

Hd. Qrs. Ind Mil. Dept.
Fort Smith, August 23d 1843.

Sir,

I respectfully transmit Captain Boone's report of his recent expedition on the Prairies, with the accompanying journal and a reduced copy of the Captain's map of his route.

I beg leave to invite the attention of the General in Chief to this journal, as affording much valuable and curious information, particularly in relation to the Salt region on the Red Forks of the Arkansas. The instructions given to Captain Boone were faithfully carried out, and much credit is due to him and his officers for the good management of the expedition —

I am, sir, very respectfully,
Your obt. servt.
Z. Taylor, Bt. Br. Genl,
U. S. A. Comdg.

The Adjutant General
of the Army,
Washington,
D. C.

CAPTAIN BOONE'S REPORT

Fort Gibson Augst 11th. 1843

Sir

I have the honour to inform you of my return with my command to this Post on the 31st of July —43, having been delayed by a severe cold taken since my return, from making an earlier report. Pursuant to your instructions of April 24th 1843, I left this Post on the 14th May to make a reconnoisance of the Western prairies. My command consisted of two subalterns, and 60 Non Com'd Offrs, and Privates. I proceeded up the North side of the Arkansas River, keeping between the Arkansas, and Verdigris Rivers for about seventy five miles, and at my camp on the Arkansas, I was joined by Asst Sargt Simpson on the 18th and Lts [Abraham R.] Johnston, & [Richard H.] Anderson with 27 men of D Co U. S. Drags, at which time I also received a copy of your letter to Col Davenport dated May 10th 1843, apprising me of the movements of Col Ryburn, and other Texians. On receiving this information, I determined to cross to the South side of the Arkansas, and then take up the upper Red Fork, thinking that I might by so doing fall in with Ryburns party. Crossed the Arkansas on the 20th, marched in a North Westerly direction, untill I reached the Red Fork, and thence, proceeded up that River without difficulty, or interruption untill the 29th May, when we fell in with a party of Osages, 35 or 40 in number, accompanied by their families, near the great Salt plains. We encamped with them, and during that night, they stole from my camp ten horses, and two mules. Six of these horses, and two mules, were public animals, the remaining four, belonged to the officers

At this time, I had not sufficient proof against them to act promptly with them. The Chief of this party call'd himself To, wan, ga, ha, his interpreter, who call'd himself John, was an Osage, and spoke tolerable English, our camp was on a creek call'd Pa-ha-bee, a branch of the Red Fork (Upper). Having spent several days in trying to recover our stolen horses, visited the great Salt plain, but without examining it, and seeing no signs of Ryburn's party, I steered more North, in order to strike the Santa Fé trace where it first strikes the Arkansas, intending to revisit the Salt plain, and give it a thorough examination I left To, wan, ga, ha and party on the 3rd of June, and on the 5th of June, met a small party of Osages, amongst whom were several of To wan ga ha's band, one of them riding one of the mules which had been stolen from us on the night of the 29th May. This I considered as satisfactory proof of the theft, they knowing their guilt, became alarmed, and attempted to escape. We seized them, took their arms, and I permitted such officers (at their request) as had lost horses, to replace them with Indian ponies, four of which were taken. I ordered the Osages to show us their camp, but could not prevail on them to do so. I then told them to go, and bring us our stolen horses, and I would restore them their property, but this had not

the desired effect. After encamping on the evening of the 5th, three osages of the same party visited our camp, and wanted to exchange their horses for the horses which had been taken from them. I again told them to bring my horses, and they should have their's, with their arms, but without effect
Next day continued North about 20 miles which brought us to the Santa Fe trace at a place which I call'd Mulberry grove, and in this grove, I found the encampment of the party which rob'd, and murdered C. Garvis [Don Antonio José Chavez][210] the Spaniard. Some five or six horse men had been there about four days before, and left signs on trees which I supposed had reference to their numbers, and the direction they were travelling. I search'd for the remains of C Garvis, [Chavez] & also sent out two detachments in search of those who had lately been there, but could find neither. Finding the Traders had not yet passed, I determined to cross over to the South side of the Arkansas, where I could get buffalo, and await the arrival of the Traders. This I did and on the 13th of June, Cap't Cooke's command came in sight. On his arrival, Cap't Cooke informed me that the caravan was a few miles behind, accompanied by Cap't [Benjamin D.] Moore & Company. Capt Cooke encamped on the left bank, while I encamped on the right bank of the Arkansas, from the 13th to the 22nd. Lt Johnston on the 13th met with a severe accident, shooting himself through the foot, in consequence of which he had to be hauled in the waggon during the remain-

der of the trip. Cap't Moore with the traders being still back about 12 miles, where they had been detained by high waters, and as Cap't Cooke thought his command sufficiently strong to protect the traders, I determined to set out on our Southern rout, intending to pass the Salt plains. Accordingly started on the 22nd, and travell'd West by South West, and on the 27th met with a large party of osages, and encamped near them at night. Their cheif was To, ca, sa, ba. In the morning I set out for the Salt plains, To, ca, sa, ba telling me, he'd go there also, and we'd encamp together. Beleiving that this party wish'd to steal our horses, I felt no disposition to meet them at the Salt plains, and after marching three miles from camp, I changed my course, and steered towards the Rock Salt, where I arrived on the 30th June. I intended remaining here some days, and to make a thorough examination of the plain, but the next day a large party of osages came, and encamped by us. Their cheif was Tallée, who with his party appeared well disposed towards us, and laughing, told us the osages had stolen our horses. The Salt Rock as I have call'd it, is well worth a strict examination, which I could not give it, not being prepared to do so. I do not consider what I there saw, to be the Rock Salt proper, although it lies in great masses, but I do believe Rock Salt to be within a few feet of the surface of the plain, and to be wash'd by the bottom of the River. It was very evident that the Indians were not pleased with our visit, and wish'd us away. Whether this was caused by a fear that we'd frighten off the buffalo, or not, they kept up a continual alarm of Pawnee Mohas[?]. The osages told me of another salt plain, where they cut up salt, which they reported to be on a prairie off from the River. I concluded to make a search for this plain and with this intention march'd down the Red Fork some 30 or 40 miles, but my search was unsuccessful. About this time Private Been [Bean] Co 'E' died. He had been hauled in the waggon from the Arkansas River. This was the only case of sickness worth mentioning, which we had on the trip. I now struck for the Canadian Fork of the Arkansas River, which I reach'd after crossing the north Fork. On arriving at the Canadian, I crossed, and travell'd down between that stream, and the False Washita untill I parted with Lt Johnston on the morning of the 14th July, when I again crossed the Canadian, keeping on its northern side, between it, and Little River, passing Choteau's Old Trading house. We struck the road leading from Edwards trading house (Old Fort Holmes)[211] to Gibson 5 miles north of Edwards', and kept on it to Fort Gibson. During the March, we lost two men, one as already stated, the other was accidentally shot, dying a few minutes after being shot. I will here remark that throughout the march we met with no difficulty in travelling though there were three waggons along. From the Arkansas to the Ne, ne, sca, there is no timber, but throughout the rest of our rout, we always found some sort of timber, affording us fuel. Throughout the Region of Red Gypsum hills, we found great quantities of Red Cedar. We subsisted on buffalo meat from the time we reach'd the great salt plain, untill we struck the settlements on the Canadian. We used the Salt from the Salt plains.

In addition to this report, I offer you a copy from my journal, as comprising the greater part of my report, and giving the particular incidents as they occur'd, together with the water courses, directions and distances travell'd. The soil of the greater portion of the country passed over was very fine, especially amongst the Gypsum hills. Gypsum and plaster of Paris, grey, blue, Red, & white, for one hundred miles from north to south, is as abundant as the Limestone is in Missouri, or Arkansas, in parts of the country we passed over.

I also send with this, a Map or Rough Sketch of the Country, with the water courses running through it. The courses, and distances are all estimated from Point to Point direct, and not according to the distances actually travell'd during each day, as it was found impossible to note the courses and distances of the windings made during each days march.

Very Respectfully
Yr Obd't Serv't
NATHAN BOONE Capt Comdg
Detacht. Dr.

To Genl. Z. Taylor
Comd'g 2nd Mil. Dep't.

CAPTAIN BOONE'S JOURNAL

Copy of a journal kept by Cap't N Boone during a March on the South W Prairies from the 14th May 1843 to 31st July 1843

Captain Boone agreeably to Department Order of the 24th April 1843, commenced his march from the beach of Grand River opposite Fort Gibson at 11 O'Clock A. M. on the 14th of May 1843. The course for the first four miles was west, When, crossing the Verdigris River at Unswatoy's Ferry, he proceeded in a South Westerly Course four miles then West 6 miles and encamped on a small prairie branch emptying into the Arkansas; having marched from 12 to 14 miles direct distance from Camp No. 1 to Fort Gibson, and about 10 miles East course.—Land, passed over during the march, heavily timbered, and very fertile.

May 15th — Monday.— Started on the march at ½ past 7. West by N. W. 15 miles. Encamped for the night on a small creek which runs into the Arkansas. The traveling good: over handsome and fertile prairie. To the left of the trail, 22 miles from Fort Gibson, was found a mineral spring slightly Chalybeate. The geological formation, passed over, consisted of sandstone which exists at Fort Gibson and on the hills above Little Rock, on the Arkansas river, and which is supposed to have a dip of a few degrees to the S. W.

3rd day. May 16th — Tuesday.— Set out at 10 A. M. course N. W. 6 miles. Encamped on a branch. of the Verdigris. difficult to Cross: the banks steep and miry.

4th day. May 17. Wednesday.— Remained all day in camp. Rain, very heavy nearly all day. the wind from the N. E. One horse of Co. E died; cause, not known. The character of the country in appearance the same as that passed on the 16th — on the 16th passed some lime stone strata of compact lime stone dip 3° S. S. W. This limestone is supposed to be the same with that underlying the Sandstone at the landing at Fort Gibson.

5th day. 4th day marching, May 18th Thursday. Moved camp one mile to the high land, and remained awaiting Co. D., which we had been informed was on the march to join us.

6th day. 5th day marching, May 19th Friday.— Set out at ½ past 7. Course W. N. W. for 10 miles, then N. W. 8 miles Encamped for the night on a creek emptying into the Verdigris. This Creek rises in the hills immediately on the Arkansas and runs N. E. The first ten miles of the day's march, was through the prairie and similar to the previous marches: the Command then entered the hills on the head of the Creek previously mentioned. Thé route was difficult from the quantity of Rock and the steepness of the hills. Some of the hills bordering the prairie were entirely free from timber; the most of them were covered with Black Jack and Post oak; with here and there a white oak, and on the water courses occasionally a few black birch. These entire hills appear to be composed of the Sand Stone previously passed: At one point the limestone mentioned on the 16th was noticed at the base of the hills after leaving the prairie. this limestone contains Encorsoils[?] and some minute bival[v]e shells. In the sand stone were noticed wave-lines, collelites,[?] and appearances similar to them, also a sort of arborescent appearance [drawing in MS.] often seen in the Sand Stone at Fort Gibson. Noticed on the prairie, the wild indigo with a blue, and also with a white flower; the wild sensitive plant; the polar plant, a rosin weed. This plant is a tall plant, perhaps 7 feet high, with a few shaped leaf which ranges, generally, north and south, affording a tolerable compass to the traveler over the prairies. A quantity of rosin is secreted at each joint which might render its cultivation desirable; its taste is strongly resinous, and the horse is very fond of it.

7th day. 6th day marching. May 20th Saturday. — Marched at ½ past 7. Course N. W. 18 miles and encamped near the Arkansas River, where the Osage trail crosses it. At 12 o'clock this day, got one of the cross timber and passed through an arm of the grand prairie, where were the remains of an extensive Indian Encampment.—

8th day. May 21st. Sunday.— Remained in camp awaiting the arrival of Lieut Johnston with Company D. Dr. Simpson having arrived the night previous. Here we built a bark canoe.— Company "D" joined about 2 o'Clock.

9th day. 7th marching.— May 22nd Monday.— Broke up camp, and crossed the Arkansas at the Osage crossing. The river is here half a mile wide, and we found it up to the saddle skirts and falling;

we hauled the wagons over with the teams and put the provisions in the bark canoe and the men waded and pulled it over, and in 10 trips, brought over the entire contents of the 3 wagons. Traveled to day about 2 miles, west, and encamped on the west bank of a small creek which empties into the Arkansas, above the Crossing.

10th day. 8th day marching.—May 23rd Tuesday.— Marched about ½ past 6. traveled 19 miles N. 70 W. followed until 2 o'clock the great Osage hunting trail, until it left the waters of the creek which we encamped on last night; then the trail turning to the South we left it on the divide, and came to the head of another more considerable creek which flows N. E. during the day saw perhaps 50 deer. The Country was much broken timber post oak and black jack openings, and prairie, the soil sandy and in some places the black jack on the high hills appeared to be dying; no doubt attributable to the dry season. The quantity of water which flows from the streams is very small compared to the extent of the country. Most of the rocks were sand stones. About 7 miles from Camp we passed a sandstone hill with a strata of limestone running through it, which we passed several times during the day afterwards, gradually getting near the beds of the streams as we travelled west. Vegetation somewhat different from the north side of the Arkansas, saw red oak, and Bur oak — two of the latter near our Camp were 4 feet in diameter. The limestone of to day contained innumerable minute shells somewhat of the shape and size of a barley grain, besides coral, or madrepores, terebratulae et. al.—

11th day. 9th day marching. May 24th Wednesday. Marched at ½ past 6. A. M. course W. N. W. 19 miles. crossed three creeks of some size flowing northwardly — encamped on a fourth larger still, with running water of a very red character; crossed a stratum of limestone apparently dipping S. E. also a stratum of reddish limestone colored by iron or [blank in MS.] under which was a stratum of clayey shale with plates of limestone intermixed. These strata no doubt out crop along the course of the creek above named, hence its color. The country passed over was rolling and in some places hilly, with timber a few hundred yards on the creeks and their tributaries.— From the hill tops in the prairie the views were extensive and beautiful. After getting on the limestone land a great change was observed in the vegetation, the grass was finer, the trees of different character, Linden, Hackberry, Black Ash, hickory, Sycamore, Cotton wood, elm, grapevines &c were observed. On the prairies the vegetation was the same, but more luxuriant. There appear to be no strawberries in these prairies. The red stream on which we camp is difficult to pass, the banks being steep and muddy. Deer and Turkies plenty, hundreds of the latter being out on the open prairie.

12th day. 10th day marching. May 25 Thursday. Marched at ½ past 6. Course N. W. 21 miles, about 14 miles N. 50 W. We passed a large creek which at first we supposed might be the Red fork of the Arkansas, being red, and apparently a long stream, but after travelling 7 miles in a more northerly direction we were gratified by finding a beautiful river about 200 yards wide, making a sweeping bend towards the South at the point where we struck it; the prairie coming in to the right bank while on the other shore the floods had thrown up high banks of white sand, which were covered with groves of Cotton wood and other trees, these, contrasted with the red color of the water gave a beautiful appearance to the river. We encamped in the prairie on the bank of the river. Our march to day was principally over the short buffalo grass, the prairie grass having almost entirely disappeared, the timber was getting scarcer, and on leaving one creek it was like putting out to the open sea until we rose the ridge, when a narrow skirt of trees would point out the position of the next. About four miles from Camp (24th) we crossed another Osage trail, more considerable than the one on which we crossed the Arkansas; On this trail we discovered two or three recent shod horse tracks, made probably before the rain. These tracks were going north east (the direction of the trail). Passed over some limestone and Sandstone of very red character. dip, not apparent, at our camp tonight on the bank of the river a sand rock out crops, under which was a stratum of reddish illuminous earth, and under that a stratum of limestone very like the stone used for lithography. Along the banks of the river were deposites of clay of a soapy feel, as red as the common Cornelian. About 3 miles before encamping, three objects were seen on the verge of the horizon, coming towards the column, in a few minutes they were on the top of the nearest hill and proved to be 3 Antelopes, the first we had seen, prompted by their well known curiosity they have approached to see what all this could mean. On the bank of the river we found some recent elk tracks the first evidence we have had of their being in the Country. Our three last days marches have been over prairie, abounding in old Buffalo wallows, and frequently we have passed the bones of buffalo whitening on the prairie; but no signs of their being here for several years. The waters of these rivers taste brackish a little and some think styptic. They are strongly [blank in MS.], and the horses appeared very fond of them.—

13th day. 11th day marching. May 26th Friday. — This morning a large stream was discovered, by Capt Boone, to be running from the north and emptying into the one on which we were encamped. A party of an officer and two men, was sent over to explore: they crossed the Red fork (as that proved to be one on which the command encamped,) at a very quick-sandy ford, and after crossing over the flat prairie for four or five miles, between the rivers, came upon the main Arkansas river, which makes a wide sweep to the south at this point and joins with the red fork about four miles N. E. of our last night's encampment. The Arkansas was nearly white above the junction. In the bend between the rivers a bed of limestone out crops, dip 6° S. E. filled with fossils. On the bank of the Arkansas another stratum was seen with the same dip, containing a great quantity of small [drawing in MS.] The course of the column was N. 80° w. 20 miles. over a ridge on the right bank of the red fork. Crossed the red fork about 4 miles before encamping, at a good solid ford. Encamped on a creek, which was called walnut, from the quantity of that tree found upon it. Some antelope seen to day, and one hare killed; the hare weighed five pounds, being poor, and not full size, the ears were near four inches long, the body 2 feet: it resembled a rabbit, but head was more delicate in proportion, and the whole appearance of the Animal indicated speed, which was astonishing, the top of tail, and the tips of ears behind, were black. Timber being very scarce, only to be found in narrow strips on the stream; the country getting very flat, with broad flat bottoms on the rivers. Saw a great number of remarkable circles of grass in the prairies, supposed to be the effects of lightning. They are circular belts of grass perhaps a yard wide — the grass entirely of a different kind; being apparently the rank prairie grass of a dark green contrasted with the yellowish green of the buffalo grass [three drawings in MS.]

14th day. 12th day marching. May 27th. Saturday. Marched at 7 A. M. Course W. 20 M. over country where there was very little variation from a general level, and occasionally, as far as the eye could reach there was no timber to be seen, except the narrow skirt which indicated the course of the Red fork. Along the course of that stream we could see large banks of sand apparently as high as the highest ground in view. Passed more recent sign of Buffalo, and what was at no distant day the stamping grounds. of countless hordes of them. The destruction of these animals yearly and their falling off so rapidly makes it certain, almost, that in a few years they will only be known as a rare species. More than 30,000 robes for Commerce come down the Missouri annually, these added to those which go elsewhere, must make the tax on the buffalo robes annually come to exceed 100,000. Taking into consideration the fact that the animals destroyed for food are taken in the summer while the hair is almost all off, and, of course, the robe useless, we can readily account for this disappearance from the grounds we have been travelling over, and make it certain that the buffalo must soon cease on these plains altogether.— Passed to day many places where salt appeared to be effloresceing on the soil. these places were evidently the favourite resort of the buffalo. Encamped on the left bank of a creek emptying into the Red fork. On this we found the carcasses of three buffalo, probably starved here by the lateness of the spring. A little before Sunset a dark cloud appeared in the north west, which soon came upon us with a frightful thunder storm, accompanied with hail.— some of the stones, as large as a hen's egg. Our horses stood until it was nearly over, then, many of them broke, and were away all night, but came back on the run at day light. Game — Deer, Antelope, turkeys, partridges, grouse, scarce observed[.] plenty of turtle doves and plover. Near Camp discovered a bank of Clay in which was a seam of whitish Chalky clay or soft limestone.—

15th day. 13th day marching. May 28th Sunday. Marched at 10 A. M. Made a late start on account of the rain. Marched 11 miles N. 10° W. Encamped on the same creek as last night, on the last timber of it, there being none North or West of it as far as could be seen on the prairie. The short grass of the prairies or buffalo grass being very short on our march. Old Buffalo [blank in MS.] and wallows in prodigious numbers. Saw to day one settlement of the prairie dog.— killed a badger and a hare.— Saw some antelope and deer, and signs of turkeys. The soil of the plain passed to day appears fertile and partakes of the red character which gives color to Red fork and other streams in this quarter. Afar off to the left on the course of the Red fork appeared some high ground, like hills covered with timber, but too distant for observation. The wind was N. W. to day, the thermometer at 55°. at Sunrise, and 62°. at one o'clock. Latitude about 36°. 20′. Encamped near an old osage encampment, marked by the ribs of their lodges still standing. They usually encamp on an eminence that they may see if their enemies approach. To procure fire wood they climb the trees and lop off the branches, when small trees cannot be obtained. This is probably the work of the Squaws. found some flint on the soil to day, in loose pieces.—

16th day. 14th day marching. May 29th.— Monday. Started at 7. going north west for some distance over the successive elevations of the prairie, we finally came in sight of an indian, and two officers started in pursuit and overtook some osages, Wa-sha-shay. They took us to their Camp and upon receiving information that one of the Salt Plains was within 20 miles, concluded to encamp on the same stream with them, and get a guide next day for it. They had killed 25 buffalo in and about their Camp, so that we are now in the buffalo range. The Creek on which they encamped flows S. E. and is quite a large branch of what we have called the Red fork — they call this Creek Pa-ha-bee — We have not seen the buffalo yet. our distance was about 12 miles N. 10°. W. Near Camp tonight, there is an out-crop of limestone nearly horizontal, under which is a thick stratum of red clay, or, more properly, clay slate, it crumbles easily and cuts like soapstone with the knife. Under this is a stratum of white stone of similar character like [blank in MS.] chalk.—

17th day. May 30th Tuesday.— This morning several horses were missing and evidence of foul play shown by the lariettes being cut. In a short time a great disturbance was shown in the osage Camp. They came and reported that the Pawnees had been at Camp and had stolen some of their horses as well as ours. This induced the Commander to detach two subalterns and 30 men to follow their trail. This party got off at about ½ past 6 and followed the Osages on the trail for near 30 miles at a gallop, but there they lost it in a sandy plain filled with buffalo. After this suspicion was fixed on the Osages, themselves, and the party returned to Camp. The horses taken were picketed in a second bottom below camp, on the Creek — rather out of the direct view of the sentinel, and so near the Osage Camp that no Pawnees would ever come there for them.— This day the party sent in pursuit were conducted about 25 miles N. 80°. W. and there crossed a creek, running to the left, of some size. their course was over, the ridges between the Creek one camp was on. and the one just mentioned. This ground is elevated about 100 feet, but very gradual, so that in crossing the country you can see the long successive ridges before and behind like the swell of an ocean.— but more extensive — The soil, red; and sandstone with red clay.

18th day. 15th day's marching. May 31st Wednesday. The Osages were informed this morning, that it was believed they were the horse thieves, and they must give up the horses or they could not go on their hunt. They said they would go and put us on the Pawnee trail. Camp was accordingly broken up and all the Indians taken with us; after travelling 10 miles West and encamped on a deep gully running S. W. towards the Red forks — from the ridge near this the Osages showed the trail of the Shod horses, and not a single poney track was among them, and the trail diverged to the left entirely of the route they led the Dragoons on yesterday; showing conclusively that they had led the party on the right side of the ridge, on a false track, while on the left these men were running off our horses. A butcher knife was found in camp where one of the horses was cut loose, and one of the pursueing party of yesterday handed it to the Chief saying he had found it in the chase, and asked him if it belonged to the Osages — "oh yes wa-sash-ay." But when told that it had done the mischief, he said his trader had traded with the Pawnee's, and they had knives like the Osages and he was mistaken. The indians near Camp dug a quantity of a sort of carrot shaped root, in taste resembling the raw potato. It forms a part of their food, and might be worth cultivating [three drawings in MS.]

19th day. June 1st Thursday.— The command remained in Camp to day and hunted buffalo; while Capt Boone, with one subaltern and two osages started to look at the Salt plain. After travelling 10 miles S 20° W. from Camp, Came in sight of the plain of Salt, looking like a large lake of white water in an extensive level country. The approach to this view was through a succession of sand hills formed at no distant day by the drifting of the light sand of which they are composed, though now covered with grass. In going through these hills, the Osages caught sight of a man in a distant hill. Capt. Boone went over to see who it was, and discovered a well in the sand made by some Indian, as there were prints of moccasins by it &c.— This gave a hint of the presence of Comanches and a turn of opinion as to the true horse thieves. Deeming it not prudent to venture further from Camp without a stronger force, the exploring party returned to camp.

20th day. June 2nd Friday.— All the disposable men were mounted this morning to search the vicinity of the Salt plains and see if there were any indians in that quarter. Lieut Anderson was left in charge of Camp. The Column started about ½ past 5, and after searching the sand hills mentioned yesterday, in vain, for indians, proceeded on to the Salt Plain. This was found good 20 miles S from Camp. The approach was very gratifying — a view of the plain from the Sand hills was really magnificent, and, from the appearance, one might expect to find salt in a solid mass for the whole extent of the plain, of several feet in thickness. Running towards the plain from the sand hills we found several streams of pure limpid water. We then came on the bed of a branch of the Red fork with its red water and quicksands. After passing two branches of this, we found ourselves on the Salt plain, which was apparently only an upper level of the bed of the aforesaid stream as level as a floor — overflowed evidently, and now dry, with the slightest possible film of crystalized Salt on the surface, enough to make it white. We went about two miles on the plain without getting half over it. Such was the effect of Mirage on the plain that we could not see across it, and the buffalo bones whitening in the sun looked like large, white animals in the distance. Buffalo appeared to be standing in water, and, in fact, the whole plain appeared as if surrounded by water. No source of this salt was discovered. Water in pools near the Red fork branch (supposed to be the Semarone [Cimarron]) was brackish, while the stream itself was not more so than at other points. From this, it is evident that the Salt has a local origin. No rock formation was passed on our route to throw light on the geological position of this Salt. At camp is the same red sand stone and red clay which have colored the soil since we were one day off from the Arkansas. There was no vegetation on the plain that in its borders appeared of the same character as in the rest of the Country. This plain is called the Pawsa Salt plain by the Osages — or big Salt. Buffalo in great abundance, and some Deer near the plain.

21st day. 16th days' marching. June 3rd Saturday.— Started at 7 A. M. and marched 20 miles north, and encamped on some ravines of the Shaw-wa-cos-pag river, where there were good springs of water — our journey to day was through the prairie, passing but two or three cotton wood trees all day. The water was sulphurous, and the rock gypsum and red sand stone dipping to the S. W. very slightly. The gypsum is mixed up with sandy marl and the strata very friable, with occasional lumps of solid gypsum, each lump containing gypsum in its three forms. An efflorescence was observed over this marl of some whitish salt which the horses were fond of; it was not, however, from Common Salt. Part of the day, the soil was red, the latter part of the day we came to a yellowish alluvion on the red. our camp was on the red again. From the hills back of our camp the view was extensive, looking over the Country for 30 miles in every direction — No timber of any amount (more than two or three trees together) can be seen — Passed great quantities of Prairie dog towns — No buffalo — a few Deer, hares, and Antelope.— one wild turkey was seen near our camp to night. About 4 miles from Camp passed the Pa-ha-bee creek, called so by the osages from a man who was killed there.— A horse of "H" Compy was missing this morning.—

22nd day. 17th day's marching; June 4th Sunday.— Started about 7 A. M. After coming 2 miles N. 20°. E. Came to the Sha-wa-cos-pay river, running S. E.— This is a principal branch of the Nes-cu-tamga, or big Salt river heretofore called the Red fork of the Arkansas. After coming 15 miles north from this, we came on the Ne-ne-scah, or clear water river, course E. S. E. The beds of both these streams were near 50 yards wide, the streams rapid, shallow, and quick sandy, with scarcely any timber on them. The course of all the streams we have passed in the last two days are marked by hills of sand along their banks, drifted into heaps by the winds. Saw no buffalo all day except one, and he was very poor — The indians had driven them off — The vegetation, the same as before — observed one new plant, a sort of vine [drawing in MS.] growing on the hard soil — also a sort of dent de lion [drawing in MS.] and the spanish bayonet [drawing in MS.]. The only out crop of rock passed over was a sort of blue clay slate, dipping slightly to the S. W. and supposed to underlye the gypsum of last night. Encamped on a clear stream, a branch of the Ne-ne-scah, running south. our course to day was n. 5°. E. distance 20 miles.

23rd day. 18th day's marching. June 5th Monday.— Started about 7 A. M. after marching about 10 miles n. we came in sight of the Arkansas River, and at the same time met a party of Osages who we evidently surprised, and one of them was riding one of the mules stolen from us on the night of the 29th May. This fixed the theft on the Osages, and the Captain took away the guns and four horses of this party, telling them that when they brought his horses they should have them back again. They gave up to us ten guns, their bows and arrows, and four ponies; and went off in a southern direction. The command crossed the Arkansas and encamped 12 miles north, from their last night's encampment. Passed to day an outcrop of whitish clay slate similar to that passed yesterday, very nearly horizontal. Under this was clay of the same color. This formation, no doubt, is very extensive and gives color to the Arkansas River, which is very much lighter in color at this point than below the junction with its red branches. Met moschetoes in quantities for the first time, to night. Passed only one buffalo. One of the men killed an antelope, the meat of which was very tender and delicate. Saw a few deer. Timber, scarcely any. on the Arkansas, a few scattered cotton wood and willow. The river in [blank in MS.]

banks and broad bed about knee deep to our horses. less quicksand than on its red branches. Course at this point a little S. E. perhaps 20°.—

24th day. 19th day's marching. June 6th. Tuesday. Marched at 7. A. M. and travelled 12 miles north. The course thro' open prairie for 7 miles, then got into sand hills of 20 or 30 feet in height ranging E and W. then came on the prairie and encamped on a clear water creek flowing S. E. This water is apparently pure coming out of the sand hills. These hills, like those near the Salt plains, have low places, sometimes with standing water, and where there is no water on the surface, it may be gotten by digging a few feet. On these hills were a few scattering cotton wood bushes. on one of the kinds were some wild ducks, which, apparently, breed there.

25th day. 20th day's marching; June 7th Wednesday. Marched at ½ past 6. Spent some time in getting over the Creek — which was a worse job than crossing the Arkansas —.— Travelled about 8 miles north and encamped on a grove of timber within 4 miles of the Sante Fé trail. our journey entirely through prairie. Found recent horse tracks of 3 or 4 horses here, and some signs of recent encampment and an old camp. Killed one Elk to day — meat very delicate — Called the grove 'Mulberry grove'—

26th day. 21 day's marching. June 8th Thursday. Marched at ½ past 6 and travelled 19 miles W. S. W. and encamped on the Little Arkansas most of one day's march was on the Sante Fe trace, which we fell into 4 miles from camp of yesterday. At the Little Arkansas we found a small party of traders, five persons and one wagin, going to trade in Sante fe and then settle in California. A cold, sleety rain fell on us all day and the wind from the north. At night the rain increased and made our night very uncomfortable. The stream we are encamped on, is the same we encamped on, the 6th. Those traders inform us that the Governor of Sante Fe is expected at the Arkansas with an escort to the traders. The trail crossing the Arkansas 30 miles from this.— The old Spaniard who was robbed last spring, was killed near our camp of yesterday.

27th day. 22 day's marching. June 9th Friday. The rain ceased about 10 A. M. marched at 12 and came W. S. W. 9 miles and encamped on a large creek putting into the Arkansas above our Camp of June 5th. This creek was at first taken for the Arkansas river itself — our first four miles was through the prairie, then, for 2 miles through the Sand hills which we passed in another place on the 6th — No Buffalo in sight to day. After travelling through the Sand hills we came to the open prairie and travelled about 2 miles. The timber on this creek is Elm and Box Elder and not large; it grows in groves along the course of the stream, some places an acre or two covered with it.—

The traders in company.— 28th day. 23rd day's marching. June 10th Saturday Started at ½ past 6. and after travelling 5 miles S. W. came to the

Arkansas river, at a point, where for miles up and down, not a tree was growing. Crossed with some difficulty as the river was rising and followed the right bank up passing through some swamp and sand hills for 7 miles. then came to a creek of some size with water almost as salt as the ocean. After passing this we came up the river 3 miles further and encamped in a thicket of Chickasaw plum bushes, and other brush. The grass and wood and water being in no other place so close together. The water in the river as cold as ice water, and almost milk white from the mud and sand.

29th day. 24th days marching. June 11th Sunday. Captain Boone, Lts. [John] Buford and Anderson and 12 men started this morning after buffalo with a hope of finding some within 10 miles, though there none in sight. After travelling south about 20 miles they fell in with buffalo and having loaded their horses returned to Camp which they reached at 2 o'clock the next morning. Their first 4 miles was through Sand hills or drifting sand and in one place, a lake near a mile long, of salt water; they then went 8 miles through an open prairie and then got into the sand hills again. They passed two creeks, perhaps branches of the Salt Creek of yesterday, else, they are creeks lost in the sand — To the S. E. of their course was a vast sand plain. During their absence the Camp was moved 2 miles S. W. Still on the bank of the river. Parties out from Camp discovered a small Salt plain on the Salt branch of the Creek of yesterday, about 4 miles from

Camp. S. The salt was crystalized on a place which the water overflowed similar to the Pawsa — called this Creek Carbine Creek, from a man losing his carbine there — near 200 Elk seen within 10 miles of Camp and plenty of buffalo S. W. within 5 miles beyond a high range of sand hills.—

30th day. June 12 Monday.— Remained in Camp all day, and sent out a party to watch the buffalo seen S. W. yesterday.—

31st day. 25th days marching. June 13th Tuesday. Marched up the river about 5 miles and sent off a party for buffalo and encamped. After a short time, the Dragoons from Fort Leavenworth were seen on the trace across the river. Supposing the crossing to be near as the indians had represented and also the citizens we had in Company, the Camp was broken up and the column got ready to move higher up. About this time Lieut Johnston rode into Camp from the chase with a severe wound in his foot; his gun, which was slung to the saddle, having gone off, accidentally, and a ball, of, about 12 to the pound, passed through his foot. As soon as this was dressed, he was placed in a wagon and the march continued, and camp was again made about 10 miles west of the camp of the 11th on the right bank of the Arkansas opposite to the Walnut creek on the Sante Fe trace. On this Creek the Dragoons from Fort Leavenworth, under Capt. Cooke, were encamped, consisting of Companies A. F. & H. Co. C being back on the trace with the traders. We here found that the trace crosses the

[?] 100 miles above this point: we also learnt that the traders felt no apprehension that Col. Warfield had only 30 men with him instead of 6 or 700. We were informed that Charvis [Chavez]; the Mexican who was murdered, had been killed on the Little Arkansas. This evening our Camp was surrounded by thousands of buffalo, and the grass very much eaten off by them.

32d. day. June 14th Wednesday.— All the men employed in drying buffalo meat to day. This night we had a terrible thunder storm with a great quantity of hail and wind. All our tents blew down, except two or three, and some of our horses ran away. We recovered these, however, the next day.—

33rd. day. June 15th Thursday. The river rising, and no crossing. Parties out in search of horses succeeded in bringing all of them in: This night we had another terrible thunder storm with not quite so much wind and hail, and being better prepared fewer of our tents blew down.

34th day. June 16th Friday. This morning the citizens with their wagon made an effort to get over the river, and a Sergeant and four mules from H & E Companies were sent to assist them. The Quicksand being bad, one of the mules of Co. H. was drowned and two wagon Saddles lost. This day a hunting party was sent out and brought in one antelope and some buffalo.—

35th day. June 17. Saturday.— River still rising — a pretty severe rain fell this morning — cleared off about 11 o'clock, still a very heavy black cloud in the S. with thunder.—

36th day. June 18th Sunday.— River falling a little. Afternoon several herds of buffalo came thro' camp, or near it, crossing the river just below — parties met them on the prairie and killed several. In destroying them, the surest weapon is a short barrelled shot-gun carrying a large ball; as they are the most easily managed. The meat on the rump generally the most tender as the muscles in that quarter are not much used. the closer to the bones the better. We cut the meat off and cut it in long strings and place it on a low scaffold of poles, over a brisk fire; and in one day with the sun it is dry enough to pack away for use. A little salt will aid in curing but it is not absolutely required. The fat of the buffalo is more oily than tallow and is better for cooking. In selecting an animal from the herd to kill, one should look to their thickness through the hump, they will be the fattest that are broadest through there, and plump. For a mile or two they run almost as fast as a horse and are then easily caught. Their hides are very thick and from the form of the Animal they are well adapted to make skin boats of. Capt Boone showed us how to make one. thus: get poles a little larger than a man's wrist and split them and bend them over, sticking both ends in the ground, for the ribs of the boat. some longitudinally and others transversely, making the boat 8 or 10 feet long according to the size of the skin, and four or five, or six feet wide. one pole along the keel and others obliquely [drawing in MS.] from stem to stern to give shape to the boat. Then [?] the poles together with thongs. Lay the skin down with the hair next the ribs and stretch it down to the whaling or rib which forms the gunwhale of the boat, trim off the edges and cut loop holes through it and lash it along. let it dry in the sun if you have time, if not reverse it at once, and cut off any part of the ribs that stick up in the way. An extra strip may be put on around the gunwhale on the outside. One of these boats is not easily paddled in a rapid current or in high wind. The safest way is for a man to wade or swim and tow the boat along. One of these boats will carry 800 lbs. To lash several together, they are placed two and two along side, and one in bow and stern [drawing in MS.] with poles lashed across the top longitudinally and transversely. In this way they increase in buoyancy and become more manageable. Six boats thus secured would float 6000 lbs. To stop a bullet hole in the hide a skewer of hard wood is run through from each side and a thread wrapped around under each end of it, as a needle is secured in a coat [drawing in MS.]

37th day June 19th Monday. The river still falling. No tidings of the traders. Saw some cattle feeding on the hills on the other side of the river, which we found, belonged to Mr. Bent from Bent's Fort, on the Arkansas, who is awaiting the arrival of some more of his party from above before going in to Missouri. He informs us that all the grass had been eaten off by the Buffalo between this and the mountains, so that his cattle nearly starved. The day was fair, with a strong wind from the S. all day.

38th day. June 20th Tuesday. Buffalo came near camp again and crossed the river at our side. The officers started after them and killed 3 within a short distance of Camp the river at this point runs nearly N. E. coming still more from the south west little west for 10 miles. The camping grounds are not very good on this side for twenty miles or more below this point. Though there is timber above and below for 15 miles. Heard to day through Capt Cooke, that the traders with Capt Moore & Co. "C." were water bound on the Cow Creek — Wind, Strong S.

39th day. June 21st. Wednesday. Captain Cooke informs us to day that the traders have 47 Wagons, including 3 dearbornes, that (Armiko) Armijo[212] is the principal Mexican, Dr. East, the American and, probably, Captain — As the traders had gotten within 12 miles and there was no guessing at, when the water would allow them to come on, and as they appeared by the intelligence furnished by Capt Cooke, to be in no sort of apprehension of an attack; we prepared for a move tomorrow.

40th day. 26th day's, marching. June 22nd. Thursday. Started at 7 A. M. and marched 15 miles S. 3°. W. and encamped on the open prairie on the heads of a creek supposed to be the creek on which we encamped on the 4th of June. No timber in sight since we left the river. The first 7 miles of our journey was through a light sandy soil, the rest clayey. Saw some Buffalo, and passed some of the largest buffalo roads bearing to E. S. E. probably to the

Salt in that region.— This night we had to resort to buffalo dung for fuel — it burns like peat — we made furnaces of sod, and found it to be excellent fuel.

41st day. 27th days marching. June 23d. Friday. Marched at ½ past 7. and travelled 18 miles S 10° W. and encamped again on the open prairie on a pond of water — Country very level the first 6 miles, thro' clayey soil and flat prairie, the next 6, thro' low sand hills, then open prairie again. We got on one eminence of 20 feet above the level 2 miles before we encamped, and saw a grand sight of perhaps 10,000 Buffalo feeding on the plain below as far as the eye could reach. Here we saw a herd of wild horses of a dozen in number — They ran off through the herds of buffalo, which did not seem to mind them — Water tonight filled with animalculae and water insects — used buffalo dung for fires. Encamped early on account of the grass.—

42nd day. 28th day marching. June 24th Saturday. Marched at ½ past 7. travelled 12 miles S. 10° W. and encamped on the waters of the Ne-ne-scah where they break out in springs along the banks and through the sand from the sunken water from above, as the Creek where we first came to it four miles from Camp had a dry bed, the waters being lost in the sand. A mile or two further they course out again, and at this point the stream is, apparently, permanent. Springs of excellent water, groves of timber, and hills hemming in our encampment on all sides,— with good grass makes it one of the most pleasant ones we have had. Our march to day was over more undulating prairie. passing one creek about 5 miles from Camp this morning with no timber on it, running E. S. E. Started a wild horse to day, and one of the officers chasing it fell in with a herd of about 30, headed by a large white horse with black spots on his croup.—Saw plenty of Buffalo to day, and Elk came near our camp this evening. The course of the Creek S. E. where we first saw it, its bed was much larger than where it commenced to run, as if a large river was lost in the sand. and a small rivulet started below that point. In the sand found was a quantity of dark sand which was strongly attracted by the magnet.—

43rd day. June 25th. Sunday. Laid in Camp all day on account of the sickness of one of the men —Parties of men and officers today brought in specimens of gypsum in all its forms. buffalo were killed, partridges, rabbits and turkeys were seen near camp. To this point the buffalo roads from all directions were converging, it being a favourite resort no doubt, in summer —

44th day. 29th day's marching. June 26th Monday. Marched about 8. After coming a mile or two we got on the high ridges where we had a most gratifying sight in one of the most curious, as well as, beautiful countries we have seen. Before us 8 or 10 miles lay the bed of the Sha wa Caspa R[iver?] a deep and abrupt valley of not more than two miles in width from which ran out in every direction, short creeks and ravines, cutting up the Country into a multitude of little valleys, in each of which there were patches of timber; all of which was below the general surface of the Country, so that one might approach very near to one of these streams without seeing it. The views from the top of the ridges was extensive and grand. We found the hills to be composed of gypsum alternating with red clay. The gypsum was in all its forms. Crossed the Sha wa cas pa [River] and encamped in a small branch half a mile from it. This water was not good: muddy and brackish. Near our camp the hills had, from the washing assumed various fantastic forms. Traveled South 12 Miles to day. [Several drawings in MS.] The seams of Gypsum often projecting out from the hill sides often formed an almost insurmountable obstacle to climbing up them. This of course was only the case when the hill was cut off from the chain. Killed some Elk and Buffalo near Camp —

45th day. 30th day's marching. June 27th. Tuesday. Marched about 8. course S. 10 miles — the first four miles very difficult climbing the hills on the South side of the river. found Gypsum here in greater quantities, pure, white, hard, and soft. Dripping over the rocks was found a small spring tasting very strong of Epsom salts. On the ridges we were joined by a band of Osages who took us to their camp when we encamped for the purpose of gaining information. The Country was similar to that of yesterday with many grand views from the hill tops. Water, not good, but creeks every two miles.— The chief of the Osages was To-cá-sab-bé. Some of his people wanted the guns and horses we had taken from To-wan-ga-ha's people, but we could not give them to them, as they were not the owners. They informed us that it was three days march West of South to the Salt Rock and two days to the nesga-tung a or Pewsa Salt plain, and that the creek we were on was a branch of nes ca tin ga which emptied itself at the salt plain. This latter information we are disposed to doubt as we expect to see the Shaw-was-cos-pay, yet crossing our course — Strata dip slightly S. E. water courses running north of east.—

46th day. 31st day marching. June 28th Wednesday. Started at 8 and travelled 15 miles S 5 W — After travelling 9 miles crossed a River which we take to be the Sha wa-cos-pay, which the Indians tell us is the nescutunga. Our route for the first 8 miles was over the high prairie ridges where we could see right and left for 20 miles. the country rolling off in successive ridges as far as the eye could reach. The last five miles we got along with difficulty as we came again into the gypseous hills — Water at the river and in the spring of the ravines, the latter with some mineral taste. Saw buffalo and one herd of wild horses. The river ran S. of East. — Timber, Cedar, and tallow tree, cotton Wood and Elm — one character given to the country by the Gypsum is that the Soil is very hard when dry, and the streams are difficult to cross from the depth of the [courses?], and when wet, are swampy.

47th day. 32nd day marching. June 29th Thursday. Started at 8, travelled S. S. W. 18 miles and encamped on the branches of a stream supposed to be the nescatunga. Our first five miles was in getting out of the heads of the hollows of the stream we encamped on.— Here we encountered the Gypsum hills again, capped and washed as those of the 26th. June — the caps were of a strata some ten feet thick, of friable over lying red clay — strata still dipping slightly S. E. Found the gypsum in immense chrystaline plates perfectly transparent on the heads of a stream flowing S to the river now in front of us. Water scarce to day, also timber, route rough in many places; saw a few buffalo and crossed one indian trail going West. When we came on the ridges, 8 miles back, we saw near the stream in front of us, a large extent of surface covered with white substance — no doubt, Salt.

[drawings in MS.]

48th day. 33rd days marchings. June 30th. Friday. Broke up camp and moved 4 miles S. S. W. to the vicinity of the Salt plain. Salt in great abundance was found. chrystalized on the surface of the plain which like the Pew-sa is nothing more than a wide bed of the river. It is in a sort of bottom making it wider than the average width of the river. The average width is near a mile — The rock Salt appears to lay near the surface of the water here and springs boiling up through it cover the surface with a concentrated solution which at once begins to deposite chrystals — a crust of chrystals is now on the plain in many places an inch in thickness, and is easily obtained, perfectly clean and as white as anything can be. The quantity of Salt appears to be unlimited.—Mustered to day.

49th day. 34th day's marching. July 1st Saturday. Broke up camp and moved across the river and Salt plain S. W. 4 miles and encamped on a small creek of water slightly brackish, but as good as any we have found in the gypsum. In crossing the river we had some trouble in the quicksand with the wagons. The bed of the river and Salt plain was about two miles wide; the salt, not as generally covering it as the Pew-sa, but thicker in the places where found than what we saw at the big salt. This afternoon it rained and Talle, the Osage Chief, and his people came and encamped with us. They informed us that all the chrystalized salt on the surface of the plain is washed off when it rains heavily (probably only dissolved) and that in a few days the sun brings it back again.

50th day. July 2nd Sunday. Parties went out after buffalo this morning, and numbers were killed near our Camp. A party went to explore the Salt plain and search for the Rock Sált. The whole cave on the right of the two forks of the river appeared to be one immense salt spring of water so much concentrated that as soon as it reaches the point of breaking forth it begins depositing its salt. In this way a large crust or Rock is formed all over the bottom for perhaps 160 acres.[213] Digging through the sand for a few inches anywhere in this space we could find the solid Salt, so hard that there was no means in our power of getting up a block of it. We broke our mattock in the attempt. In many places through this Rock salt crust the water boiled up as clear as chrystal; tempting to one suffering from thirst; but so salt, that our hands after being immersed in it and suffered to dry, became as white as snow. Thrusting the arm down one of these holes they appeared to be walled with salt as far down as the arm could reach. The Cliffs which overhang this place are composed of red clay and gypsum and capped with a stratum of gypsum, no doubt the same as that which capped the hills we passed on the 29th of June. If such be the fact (and there can be no doubt of it) The source of these springs lays to the north, and if there be Rock Salt in this formation, it would be found among the hills we have been crossing for the last few days.— We found this Salt a little bitter from the impurities it contains, probably, Epsom Salt principally. We are now satisfied that this river must be the Semarone [Cimarron]. Two forks came together here the north comes here from the N. W. the South, from the South West. The river flows a little south of East after the junction in a sandy bed a mile wide. [drawing in MS.] The indians inform us that there is salt between this and the north fork of the Canadian, 4 days journey hence — It seems probable that this river is not the same with the one in which we found the big Salt. The north fork is the Semarone [Cimarron].—

51st day. 35th day's marching July 3rd. Mon-

day. Broke up Camp and marched for the nescubhe-toh-ta or salt in the plain away from the river. Marched 15 miles east, crossing the river 8 miles from Camp where we discovered in the bluff a strata of blue clay underlying the red clay, and about on the level of the salt spring of yesterday. This clay and the red in these bluffs taste quite salty; probably from these the Salt Springs come. These strata capped with gypsum out crop all along the river in bluffs near 100 feet high; giving a picturesque character to the scenery. Above on the high prairie mounds of the same material show from afar projected against the horizon in the Salt region [drawing in MS.] might indicate their proximity. The route to day was difficult for wagons,— part gypsum and part sand hills. Encamped on a creek among low sand hills — water bad and scarce — The strata on the hill tops on the south side of the river appear to have a dip to the north at this point as if there was a bend in the strata along the line of the river. though the general dip is, no doubt, from the mountains. As this formation of gypsum and red clay outcrops along in a line W. of South until it is found at the paunee peaks. In one place on the Canadian it forms a deep channel for the river of 8 or 10 miles of steep walls on each side with no streams putting in on either side.

52nd day. 36th day's marching July 4th Tuesday. Marched 4 miles E. S. E. and encamped on a pretty grove of Elm, hackberry, Tallow tree, and chittim [wood] with good grass and water.— and buffalo in sight, concluded to spend the 4th and rest the teams which are nearly worn out. The country sandy, with a few sand hills. Spent the Fourth in roasting fine Buffalo meat.— Cured some.—

53rd day. 37th day's marching — July 5. Wednesday. Marched about 8. from our pleasant encampment course 18 miles E. S. E. our journey was over low sand hills generally, covered with grass; with one or two plains intervening. The Semarone lay on our right all day with its high gypsum banks ranging along its southern shore. Encamped within a mile and a half of the river on a creek of good water running out of the sand. Came this afternoon to some black jack oak groves, some of the trees two feet in diameter. This is the first black jack we have seen since we first came among the Red water on the other side of the east branches of the Red Fork or Nescatunga. The grove near our Camp has mulberry, bitter elm, & dog wood.

54th day. 38th day's marching July 6. Thursday. Marched about 8. came S. 50° E. 10 miles. We first marched S. 4 miles and crossed the Semarone [Cimarron] or Big Red Fork. where its sandy bed was a mile wide with no water, scarcely, running. On the surface of the sand an occasional spot would have a slight film of salt chrystalized on it. The route on the north side of the river was through sand hills with clear water, on the south side thro' a plain of red soil laying at the back of high gypsum hills a mile or two to our right. The gulleys difficult for wagons to get over. Encamped on a creek with muddy bed running north. The river a half mile to our north, running E. S. E., not finding the salt described by the indians, here; we intend retracing our steps a little tomorrow, as we must have passed it. Private Bean of E. Co died, at this camp at 9 P. M. of a desease of the brain of old standing. He has been hauled in the wagon since we left the Arkansas River.—

55th day. 39th day's marching. July 7th Friday. Buried Bean on the bank of the creek, near a Cotton Wood tree, which was marked with his name. Called the Creek Dragoon Creek, from the circumstances of his death. It is 3 miles west of what we suppose to be the last of the gypsum hills on the right bank of the Semarone. Marched 10 miles West — Route along the river first north West, then off South — very rough the high gypsum cliffs overhanging us all day. Some of them very picturesque, all near 200 feet high. The strata of blue clay which lay at the bed of the river at the nes cu ca sca pay is here some distance up the cliff. Still there does not appear any reason to doubt that the strata dip S. E. They are so nearly horizontal however, that it is impossible to make sure by the eye. It is probable that there is a logal [local] dip to the north near the rock salt as the water boils up on the south side of the river. If not, the spring must come under the river and boil up on the south side. It is evident, however, that the general dip of these strata is from the mountains. Capt Boone has observed these gypsum S. S. W. from this at the Paunee Peaks, south of this. On the Canadian it forms a channel for the river called a canyon by the Spaniards, or a deep channel for 800 miles with no streams putting into it and very difficult to cross.— We searched for the salt on the plain away from the river, as described by the Osages, but saw nothing of it. Concluded to march westward tomorrow to get into the buffalo again. Encamped on a creek running north.

56th day. 40th day's marching. July 8th Saturday. Marched about 8. 20 miles S 30° W. and encamped on the north fork of the Canadian. Our route lay, for 10 miles, up the divide between two creeks — branches of the Semarone [Cimarron] — the one we encamped on, and the one we crossed at mid-day yesterday. After we got on the ridge between the Semarone and the north Fork, we came into a dense thicket of black jack which we had to cut through for near a mile, we then came in sight of the north fork, and came down to it through a skirt of prairie with thickets of black jack on either side. The gypsum dipped under the hills we climb this morning, and we are now in a sandy country. No buffalo. The vegetation changing somewhat with the soil. Throughout the gypsum country the red cedar grew on the high point of the hollows, in some places, abundantly, low down, the tallow tree and a sort of mock orange called the chittim wood by Capt Boone, with Cotton wood and bitter elm formed the greatest part of the forest trees. From the time we left the ne-ne-Sea until we got out of the gypsum all the water was rendered unfit, unpalatable by the solution of various salts: In some cases the rice boiled in the water was so bitter as to be unfit to eat. We could not detect any, by the taste, except the Epsom and Glauber Salts: but as the water rendered the mouth sore, we presumed. there was sulphate of iron (vitriol) in it. In this route from the Arkansas to the North fork, the greatest difficulty in the passage of troops will be the scarcity of grass near wood and water. In the dry season the grass would be very much burnt up.—

57th day. 41st day's marching. July 9th Sunday. Marched about 8. After a shower, and went 5 miles S. W. and, a storm approaching, we halted and encamped. After the rain went round, we struck our tents and moved 7 miles further South and encamped on the creek we halted on this morning running N. E. into the north fork; on this we found the slippery elm, the mulberry, and a sort of black walnut with many appearances to indicate its being a new variety. The country passed over to day was gently rolling, and covered with fine grass; slight skirts of timber on all the creeks: soil, red and sandy — No buffalo yet and very little sign. The Country is no[t] hunted by the osages; they do not pass the north fork, it is believed, and small bands of creeks, and other Indians keep the Buffalo frightened off from this range.—

58th day. 42nd day's marching. July 10th Monday.— Marched about 8. Rain again in the morning before we started. Came 8 miles S. W. and encamped on a stream which is quite large and with a sandy bed, but no running water. This may be the main Canadian but we think it is too near. The Country begins to look gypseous again. On the ridge we passed a thicket of low blackjack. Buffalo roads very large, but saw only one Buffalo. This evening a party of 8 or 10 Caddoes came to Camp — they inform us that there are very few buffalo in the country.

59th day. 43rd day's marching. July 11th Tuesday. Marched about 8 and came 4 miles S. and encamped on the south side of the Canadian on a small Creek. Bought some Buffalo meat of the Caddoes, who are in camp near us. There was very little water running in the river where we crossed it. and that soon sunk in the sands. The bed of the River half a mile wide the Course S. E. To the west the high gypsum hills show themselves. About 20 miles off.

60th day. 44th day's marching. July 12. Wednesday. Marched about 7. travelled about 16 miles E and encamped on the waters of a Creek flowing from the Canadian. Suppose it to be one emptying into that river 20 miles below this. This Creek heads directly on the bluffs of the river. Off to the North we see a long range of cross timber on the ridge beyond the Canadian, which is in appearance similar to that crossed before cutting to the north fork on the 8th July. This, and the fact that the Canadian takes a turn to the north here, induces an idea, that maybe the river we took to be the North fork puts into the Canadian there: this is also strengthened, by the river being longer where we crossed it, than the North Fork should be. Fell in with three buffalo this evening and killed two: which will enable us to lay by tomorrow and explore the country north, and rest our mules. The Country passed over to day was high, giving us a sight of hills to the south of the False washita twenty or thirty miles. The formation was gypsum, and passed hills of it shortly after we left camp, with the strata contorted in every direction. face of the country beautiful — grass excellent — Saw 7 wild horses. Timber scarce; but enough on the Creeks for Camping purposes at all times.

61st day. July 13th Thursday.— Remained in Camp all day. Capt Boone went out to explore, to the north — found it to be 15 miles to the Canadian. No signs of the river we supposed to be the North Fork, coming into it, though that seemed probable from the size of the river and from the course of the Canadian at this point.—

62nd day. 45th day's marching. July 14th Friday. Marched about 8. Travelled 18 miles E. S. E. The first ten miles in the gypsum hills with deep and precipitous ravines. Crossed one of these at an old buffalo road, and found white oak and cedar trees with others, in it, and stratum of red sand stone capped with gypsum dipping S. E. After we got out of this, we rose on a beautiful level prairie with luxuriant grass, which had two small herds of wild horses on it. This level country continued for 8 miles further, with little interruption. We encamped on a small prairie ravine which cut its way through the red sand stone we passed this morning. There were three prairie mounds of 40 or 50 feet in height on the last 8 miles of our route. During the day the valley of the Canadian lay 5 or 6 miles to our left, with a thick forest of cross timber capping the ridge beyond the whole way.

63rd day. 46th day's marching. July 15th Saturday. Marched about 8. Travelled S. E. 15 miles. After starting, was compelled to leave an old horse of Company D, which had taken sick during the night. Our route to day, generally, over level prairie, with the valley of a large creek to the right. The prairie cut up with ravines occasionally running through the red sand stone of yesterday. The ridge beyond the Canadian still capped with thickets of trees, probably black jack. To the South-East, a row of high prairie mounds beyond the creek. Camp on the left bank of the creek above mentioned which empties into the Canadian half a mile from this. Called the creek Cow wa map sha from the wild horses we saw on it.— Course of this creek, N. E.—

64th day. 47th day's marching. July 16th Sunday. Marched about 8. Travelled 12 miles E. S. E. After crossing the Creek at camp, at a good crossing, we came within two miles to another with a deep bed in the red sand rock. This creek we had to head a mile or two to the South. The first four miles of our route was over a generally level country. We then came into a country, with high parallel ridges running into the river.— Towards evening the hills became more abrupt, covered with black-jack — Camp on a creek, the head of which is in a very broken country. Vegetation changing — white oak, walnut and slippery elm on the creeks, on the prairie abundance of chickasaw plums, dwarf buckeye, and dwarf oak.—

65th day. 48th day's marching. July 17th Monday.— Marched about 8. Travelled 19 miles E. S. E. Most of the country passed over was beautiful. A large creek on the right with heavy masses of timber on the ravines running to the Canadian to our left. We kept the dividing ridge all day which was cut across by hollows from the creek to the river. Water scarce, and the day hot, with a good many flies: our animals suffered very much. Encamped on this creek which runs north at this point and goes into the Canadian within a few miles — Camp in sand hills very low, on the left bank of the creek.

66th day. 49th day marching, July 18th Tuesday. Marched about ½ past 8. Travelling 14 miles East. Parted from Lieut Johnston and Company to day: he striking for Fort Washita agreeably to his orders, and we making for the Canadian, with the view of crossing it, and travelling on the dividing ridge of the Canadian and Little River. The Canadian where we crossed it ran E. S. E. its bed very nearly dry: water only being found at the mouths of the various creeks putting into it, but soon swallowed up by the sand composing the bed of the river. Banks of the Canadian on either side consisting of Sand hills extending from half to a full mile from its shores and covered with plum thickets, bearing a fine large red fruit, which we found ripe and very palatable. Met our Shawnee friends who state the distance to Choteau's trading house as trifling. Country — after leaving the sand hills — rolling prairie intersected by numerous wooded creeks rendering the scenery very pleasing to the eye. Camped on a Creek running into Little River, north. Cross timbers [blank in MS.] up 4 miles from our Camp.

67th day 50 day's march July 19th Wednesday. Started about 7. Travelled E. on what we thought to be the divide between Little River and the Canadian, making a distance of 14 miles, and passing over a flat prairie country, very much parched up by the summer heat. Vegetation very scant; the buffalo grass having been eaten down very close by the buffalo, and not being yet replaced by the long prairie grass, which is gradually working its way to the mountains. Skirted the cross timbers for about two miles. This timber is so called, from the fact that it runs from Red River across to the Arkansas, Arms of it extending north of the Arkansas. It consists of dwarfish looking scrub oaks, whose branches extending down and interlacing render it almost impenetrable. Camped on the South side of Little River, on a tributary of that stream.

68th day 51st day's march. July 20th Thursday. Started between 6 and 7, retracing our steps for about 4 miles — Capt. Boone having made an examination of the country yesterday evening, after we encamped, thinking that the divide of the Canadian and Little River ran to the right of us:—in which opinion he was correct. Travelling extremely tedious to the mules in consequence of the numerous little creeks we had to cross in order to reach the divide of the main stream its head of Little River being one. This stream, running about E. S. E. is difficult to cross with wagons: its banks being steep and composed of red mud, and the growth of timber and under brush being very heavy, occupying some time in getting a road to enable the wagons to work through. The head waters of Little River rise within half a mile of the Canadian, thus jamming the divide close on to the banks of the latter river, and rendering it extremely difficult to distinguish it, and the tributaries of Little River looking as if they ran into the Canadian until observed within a very short distance of their banks and then they disappear through a ravine which a traveller would never suppose to exist 'till close on them.—Distance in a E. S. E. Course, passed over 15 miles — our days march having been 18 or 19 miles. Camped on a Creek emptying into the Canadian. Feel some anxiety with regard to our distance from Choteau's trading house, the men having only enough dried buffalo meat for supper, and breakfast tomorrow morning, and Choteau's old place is represented as being 100 miles from Edward's where we first expect to procure provisions (mouth of Little River).

69th day. 52nd day's march. July 21st Friday. Started about six o'clock and travelling a few miles S. E. a hill was seen about 8 miles off, supposed by

Capt Boone to be the ground called Mason's Fort, where Col. Mason formerly held a council with the Comanches and expected an attack. This proved to be the hill and 4 miles from the ruins of Choteau's old trading house, at which we arrived after travelling six miles. Resting there an hour, we resumed our march on the road made by the traders from this point through the cross timbers, hoping to reach a house which the Shawnees had informed us to be on the road ten miles from Choteau's, where we could get corn and beef, which are very much needed. This road we found in a horrible state, the soil consisting of red clay, which washes very badly, producing deep ravines where the wagon wheels had made their tracks. This road, as bad as it was, proved very advantageous to us, facilitating our movements; our men being unable to exert themselves with that activity and energy necessary to cut a road through timber where a pack mule would be unable to pass. Camped 12 miles from site of Choteau's old trading house. No provisions. Camped on a small prairie on the edge of a creek running into Little River. Distance 18 miles S. E.

70th day. 53d day's march. July 22nd Saturday. Made a late start this morning about 10 o'clock in consequence of our mules having strayed off. It being necessary in consequence of the indifferent grasing and their reduced condition to give them a greater range than the length of their Lariettes. Marched 17 miles E. S. E. roads for the first six miles almost impassable, but after that distance, improving. the soil becoming more sandy, and before the day's march was concluded, changing from the red, to a white sandy soil. Country more diversified in its character than yesterday — little prairie more frequently presenting themselves and becoming somewhat more extensive. Little or no change in vegetation. Timber the same as yesterday. Camped on a creek called White Rock Creek, from the banks being composed of white sandstone Rock, on which numerous names have been cut. Indians, Whites &c. No house yet. Lost a horse here — strayed off.

71st day. 54th day's march. July 23d Sunday. Started at sunrise in hopes of reaching some Indian settlement where we can get corn and beef. The Country begins to change. The timber changing, the scrub oaks occasionally intermixed with the cotton wood, Elm, and Ash. The prairies also becoming more extensive, though still presenting few inducements to Agriculturalists, there being a great scarcity of water and no building or rail timber — When we had travelled about 8 miles E. from Camp we were met by a party of Creek Indians, who informed us they lived 4 miles south of our road and could supply all our wants. The command accordingly turned off and encamped on a beautiful oak grove near a spring shown to us by the Indians. Measures were immediately taken to supply our wants, and the men were soon engaged in preparing their meals with an eagerness which plainly showed their gratification in once more having the means of gratifying their appetites.— More merriment and hilarity in Camp to day than I have witnessed for some time past. our Creek friends lived on the Canadian; had good farms, an abundance of stock of every description, and seemed to understand the art of living and surrounding themselves with comforts.—

72nd day. July 24th Monday. Remained in Camp to day to rest our jaded cattle and to dry our beef. Indians visited us throughout the course of the day, bringing in marketing of various kinds — Seemed to regard our presence as a kindly visitation of providence in supplying them the means of disposing of some of their produce and the means of getting a little money.

73d day. 55th day's march. July 25th Tuesday. Resumed our march about ½ past 6 — marching over a prairie country E. N. E. for about 8 miles 'till we reached the Timber skirting Little River. Then we passed over oak ridges for 2 miles 'till we reached the bottom of Little River. We crossed the river about 1 o'clock and should have gone on some miles further but for an accident resulting in the death of a man of "H" Company which detained us 'till too late to resume the march. While pulling the wagons up the north bank of the river a Rifle leaning up against a tree was knocked down and accidentally discharged, by a man pulling in rear of Seiter, the Contents of the rifle passing into the back of the latter and passing up killed him in 15 minutes. He was buried about 200 yards from the crossing of the river, on the north side of the trace. The command was moved off a short distance on the edge of a small prairie running up to the river and Camped. Timber in the bottom of Little River very large, and various Bois d'arc among the rest.

74th day. 56th day's march July 26th Wednesday. Started at 7 o'clock travelling 16 miles E. N. E. The roads in consequence of rains which fell yesterday and during the night, heavy: mules labouring over them with difficulty. Country generally prairie, soil good, rather rocky, Sand rocks frequently showing themselves above the surface of the ground.

75th day. 57th day's march. July 27th Thursday. Started at 6. Marched 16 miles N. E. Camped on a creek running east into the Canadian with a house on its South bank, the first near which we have camped. About 4 miles from this morning's Camp we struck the road leading from old Fort Holmes or Edward's trading house to Fort Gibson, about four miles from the Canadian where Fort Holmes is located. Country passed over high rolling prairie intersected by numerous creeks thickly timbered, one of which is memorable to troops stationed at Fort Gibson, from the fact that a Sick Camp was established there and many soldiers were buried. A large tree at the head of one of the graves has a finger pointing to the grave and written under it "Soldiers grave" We sent a soldier to Edward's when we got into the road and on his return news was received from Lieut Anderson who had in consequence of hugging the divide on the Canadian too closely, lost himself and company amongst the hills of the Blue River and getting out of provisions left his wagon and five men with Lieut Johnston and proceeded in search of provisions. Fort Holmes being the first place where he found them — 45 miles from his wagon.

76th day. 58th day's march. July 28. Friday. Marched to day 16 miles, Course E. N. E. having made an early start.— Country very broken and rough, gravelly hills which hurt our unshod horses very much. Creeks quite numerous, heavily timbered — and ridges of the north fork of the Canadian running down close to the road covered with timber. Camped on a creek emptying into the Canadian 4 or 5 miles from Apothleohole's town.

77th day. 58th days march. July 29th Saturday. Marched 16 miles. Course N. E. Country, rough prairie 'till within 5 miles of the North Fork. Halted at the North Fork about an hour, fed our horses and resuming our march crossed the river at the Falls, and proceeded 5 miles further. Camping on a prairie stream near the timber of the north Fork.

78th day. 59th day's march. July 30th Sunday. Started at 6. Marched 20 miles. N. N. E. the weather being very favourable for travelling — a constant drizzling rain falling throughout the day and cooling the atmosphere.— Country passed over prairie, with exception of belts of timber along the various creeks intersecting our road. Saw the high hills around Gibson from an eminence on the road.

Camped on a creek 12 miles from Fort Gibson at the termination of a range of tabular ridges running from the Arkansas river.

79th day. 60th days march. July 31st Monday. Started at 5 o'clock this morning, marched N. N. E. The timber of the Arkansas soon presented itself to our view, together with the most elevated of the hills about Fort Gibson. On our left were a singular range of ridges, called by Capt. Boone the Devils' Card Table, consisting of three ridges very steep in their ascent flat on the top and terminated to the south by a conical hill which, in the distance looks like a tower. These hills are visible from prospect hill at Fort Gibson. Reached the Arkansas about 10 oClock, and by one o'clock our command was formed on the parade ground at Fort Gibson.—

To	Nathan Boone
Genl. Z Taylor	Capt Capt Comdg
Comd'g 2nd Mil'y Dep't	Detachment Dragoons

NOTES AND REFERENCES

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CHAPTER I

[1] In the preparation of this chapter Miss Ruth Gallaher's article on *The Military-Indian Frontier, 1830-1835*, in *The Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, July, 1917, has been of especial value.

[2] *American State Papers, Military Affairs*, Vol. IV, p. 643; *Statistical Atlas of the United States, 1900*, p. 25.

[3] *American State Papers, Military Affairs*, Vol. IV, p. 592.

[4] *American State Papers, Military Affairs*, Vol. IV, p. 593.

[5] *American State Papers, Military Affairs*, Vol. IV, p. 727.

[6] This discussion is found in the *American State Papers, Military Affairs*, Vol. IV, pp. 284-292; it consists of reports by Secretary of War John H. Eaton, Major General Alexander Macomb, Adjutant General R. Jones, and Major General E. P. Gaines.

[7] Report of Secretary of War Lewis Cass in the *American State Papers, Military Affairs*, Vol. IV, p. 709.

[8] Surgeon General Jos. Lovell's report in the *American State Papers, Military Affairs*, Vol. IV, pp. 85, 86.

[9] Quoted from a letter by Lieutenant Joseph S. Gallagher in the *American State Papers, Military Affairs*, Vol. IV, pp. 291, 292.

[10] *American State Papers, Military Affairs*, Vol. IV, pp. 709, 718.

[11] From the report of Surgeon General Jos. Lovell, dated October 20, 1831.

[12] From the comparative statement of C. Irvine, Commissary General of Purchases, dated October 11, 1830.

[13] Report of Brevet Colonel George Bomford, dated November 30, 1830.

[14] *American State Papers, Military Affairs,* Vol. IV, pp. 626, 627, 629.

[15] *Wisconsin Historical Collections,* Vol. V, p. 254.

[16] *American State Papers, Military Affairs,* Vol. IV, p. 281.

[17] There are two first-hand reports of this expedition: that of Major Bennet Riley, commander of the detachment, is found in the *American State Papers, Military Affairs,* Vol. IV, pp. 277–280; that of Lieutenant Philip St. George Cooke is found in his *Scenes and Adventures in the Army,* pp. 40–93.

[18] These episodes are described in the writer's *Henry Dodge,* Chapters IV, V.

CHAPTER II

[19] Report of Secretary of War Lewis Cass, dated November 25, 1832, and printed in the *American State Papers, Military Affairs,* Vol. V, pp. 18–25.

[20] *United States Statutes at Large,* Vol. IV, p. 652.

[21] *American State Papers, Military Affairs,* Vol. V, p. 280.

[22] Hildreth's *Dragoon Campaigns to the Rocky Mountains,* pp. 36, 37. This volume of 288 pages was published in 1836 and consists of a series of letters by James Hildreth, the author. Besides the history of several marches of this regiment there are interesting sketches of Indian life and of scenery.

[23] Hildreth's *Dragoon Campaigns to the Rocky Mountains,* pp. 15, 30.

"Captain E. V. Sumner's corps of U. S. Dragoons, or rangers destined for the Indian service, arrived at Buffalo, on the 3d inst. [August 1833] and left next day for their place of destination. The Buffalo Journal says, they were the finest looking raw recruits we ever saw; all New Yorkers, selected by capt. S. himself from the northern and western counties of the state, within the age of 25 years, and as nearly as possible 5 feet 8 inches in height. All possessing a good English education and of strictly correct habits."—*Niles' Register,* Vol. XLIV, p. 422.

[24] Cooke's *Scenes and Adventures in the Army,* pp. 197–204.

[25] The facts and the descriptive features of these river journeys are condensed from Charles Joseph Latrobe's *The Rambler in North America*, Vol. II, pp. 315–327. The author of this work, published in 1835, was an Englishman. In 1833 he visited Chicago and crossed Illinois to St. Louis. From there he went overland to Peoria, Galena, and Prairie du Chien. The Mississippi was ascended to St. Anthony, from which point he floated down the river to New Orleans. Latrobe was a keen observer and an interesting narrator.

[26] Charles Fenno Hoffman who visited this post three months later (February, 1834) found there a garrison of five companies commanded by Colonel Zachary Taylor and quartered in handsome barracks built by the soldiers themselves. Shooting and hunting of all kinds furnished amusement for the troops as well as for the population of voyageurs and hunters, half Indian and half French. Grouse, snipe, and ducks abounded. "Elk, bear, and wolves are the game of those who are more ambitious in their sport, and choose to go farther to seek it. The meat of the first I have not yet tasted, but I made a capital dinner yesternoon from the sirloin of the second at the commandant's quarters. Bruin was served up in handsome style, and some old wine from Colonel T.'s hospitable cellar relished in this latitude."—Hoffman's *A Winter in the West*, Vol. II, pp. 9–24.

[27] "The position of this little Fort is remarkable, occupying the rocky extremity of an island three miles long, and of half that width. It forms a square, with blockhouses at the angles, two of which, impending over the limestone precipice, are picturesque objects. On the western bank of the Mississippi, extending to the southward, the Sauks and Foxes have their Reservation."—Latrobe's *The Rambler in North America*, Vol. II, p. 325.

[28] Flagg's *The Far West*, Vol. I, pp. 149, 150. See also Thwaites's *Early Western Travels*, Vol. XXI, p. 122; and Ferrall's *A Ramble of Six Thousand Miles Through the United States of America*, pp. 131, 132.

[29] Flagg's *The Far West*, Vol. I, p. 149. An excellent description of the barracks and of the dragoons as they appeared in March, 1834, is given in Hoffman's *A Winter in the West*, Vol. II, pp. 86–97.

[30] *American State Papers, Military Affairs*, Vol. V, p. 39; the quotation in the text is from Flagg's *The Far West*, Vol. I, p. 150.

[31] Hildreth's *Dragoon Campaigns to the Rocky Mountains*, pp. 37, 38.

[32] Hildreth's *Dragoon Campaigns to the Rocky Mountains*, pp. 45–47.

[33] Dodge's *Military Order Book.* This is a manuscript document in Colonel Dodge's own handwriting, containing his military orders and correspondence from August, 1832, to March, 1836. The orders and letters issued from widely separated points in the Mississippi Valley, are all written in ink and are fairly legible, despite the nearly eighty years that have passed since their composition. The document is in the possession of the Historical Department at Des Moines, Iowa, and all references to it in this volume are to the original and unpublished source.

This letter in Dodge's *Military Order Book* is to Col. R. Jones, Adjutant General, dated Jefferson Barracks, August 28, 1833.

[34] Hildreth's *Dragoon Campaigns to the Rocky Mountains*, pp. 44, 45, 49, 50.

[35] Latrobe's *The Rambler in North America*, Vol. II, pp. 318, 319.

[36] Hildreth's *Dragoon Campaigns to the Rocky Mountains*, pp. 42, 43.

[37] Hildreth's *Dragoon Campaigns to the Rocky Mountains*, pp. 51, 52.

CHAPTER III

[38] Hildreth's *Dragoon Campaigns to the Rocky Mountains*, pp. 59, 60.

"In what originated this march? Was any important public end to be attained? Was it to repel an invading foe? Was it to make a sudden and important attack upon a foreign enemy? Did the good of the service in any way call for it? To these questions there is but one answer — No! There has been assigned, as the only and great motive, *that the corps having been raised for the defense of the frontier, would be disbanded if it remained inactive so far in the interior as Jefferson Barracks.*" — Cooke's *Scenes and Adventures in the Army*, p. 220.

"Before they were all clothed,— and some without instruction,—

wretchedly armed, they were put upon horses, and started on a five-hundred-mile march in snow. Arrived in the last days of December, they found no quarters, stables, or forage; this last was not attainable. The mercury sank to —10°.''— Quoted from Cooke's *Our Cavalry* in the *United Service*, July, 1879, Vol. I, pp. 329-346.

[39] Hildreth's *Dragoon Campaigns to the Rocky Mountains*, pp. 62, 63. Incidents and descriptions of the march are taken largely from this volume.

[40] This post, which was erected in 1824, was located on the left bank of the Neosho River near its junction with the Arkansas River in what is now Muskogee County, Oklahoma. In November, 1834, its garrison consisted of nine companies of about four hundred men. The fort was abandoned in 1857.— *American State Papers, Military Affairs*, Vol. V, p. 370; Thwaites's *Early Western Travels*, Vol. XX, p. 105.

[41] Henry Dodge's letter to Adjutant General R. Jones, dated February 2, 1833, in Dodge's *Military Order Book*. See also Hildreth's *Dragoon Campaigns to the Rocky Mountains*, pp. 76, 77, 83, 84.

[42] Dodge to Adjutant General R. Jones, February 15, 1834, in Dodge's *Military Order Book*.

[43] Dodge to Adjutant General R. Jones, February 2, 1834, in Dodge's *Military Order Book*.

[44] The descriptive material concerning the life and the amusements of the dragoons at Camp Jackson during the winter of 1833-1834 is found in Hildreth's *Dragoon Campaigns to the Rocky Mountains*, pp. 85-88.

[45] Letter from Camp Jackson, dated April 18, 1834, to George W. Jones, found in the Historical Department at Des Moines, Iowa.

[46] Hildreth's *Dragoon Campaigns to the Rocky Mountains*, p. 96.

[47] Dodge to Adjutant General R. Jones, March 31, 1834, in Dodge's *Military Order Book;* Hildreth's *Dragoon Campaigns to the Rocky Mountains*, pp. 98-101.

[48] Dodge to Adjutant General R. Jones, February 15, 1834, in Dodge's *Military Order Book*.

[49] Hildreth's *Dragoon Campaigns to the Rocky Mountains,* pp. 104–106.

[50] Hildreth's *Dragoon Campaigns to the Rocky Mountains,* p. 106; letter by Colonel Dodge from Camp Jackson to General Henry Leavenworth, dated May 9, 1834, and found in Dodge's *Military Order Book;* Gregg's *Commerce of the Prairies,* Vol. I, pp. 30, 31.

[51] This journal, covering the time between May 11 and June 2, 1834, was kept by a dragoon of Company I. The textual account of this march is based wholly upon this journal, which has been edited by the author and may be found in *The Iowa Journal of History and Politics,* Vol. VII, pp. 335–341.

[52] The entry for May 23rd reads: "After a march of 27 miles made Camp Clyman. The first part of this days march was over a barren soil with good water, in the afternoon the land was good with some of the best springs I ever saw. Our men & horses are improving & our situation is as pleasant as can be expected while on a march. Our officers are J. B. Brown[e], Capt. A. G. Edwards Lieut. L. A. Styles 1 B. F. Price 2 J. C. Parrott 3 L. A. Thompson 4 sergents Bartlett — Terrill Easman & rice Corporals".

[53] Hildreth's *Dragoon Campaigns to the Rocky Mountains,* pp. 119–121.

[54] Catlin's *North American Indians,* Vol. II, pp. 454–457 (Hazard's Edition of 1857). Mr. Catlin was skeptical as to the ultimate success of this prospective tour. In the first place, the difficulty of organizing and equipping forced the regiment to start too late by two months. And secondly, the presence of such a large force would cause the Indians with their families to flee to their hiding-places among barren wastes where the troops could not follow. From those points the Indians might annoy the dragoons by striking at their hunting parties and cutting off their supplies.

CHAPTER IV

[55] This chapter was constructed from the following sources:

(a). *American State Papers, Military Affairs,* Vol. V, pp. 373–382. This is the journal kept by Lieutenant T. B. Wheelock during the entire march. Although it is sketchy in form it presents a fascinating narrative as well as an official and accurate account.

(b). Catlin's *North American Indians*, Vol. II, pp. 452–528, Hazard's edition of 1857. The same material is also found in the *Smithsonian Report* for 1885, Part II. Mr. Catlin was at this time thirty-seven years of age, and enjoyed the confidence of Colonel Dodge of whom he painted a portrait. Dodge declared of Catlin's portraits of Indians that "The *likenesses* are good, very easily to be recognized, and the *costumes* faithfully represented." Vivid descriptions of the Indians and narratives of buffalo hunts, marches, scenery, and Indian councils from a keen observer, a forceful writer, and an artist give both interest and value to this source.

(c). Dodge's *Military Order Book*.

(d). Hildreth's *Dragoon Campaigns to the Rocky Mountains*.

(e). Manuscript letters from Henry Dodge in the Historical Department at Des Moines.

(f). *A Journal of Marches by the First United States Dragoons, 1834–1835*. This document describes four marches by the First United States Dragoons which extended over the area of five States of the Mississippi Valley. The author of the *Journal* was a member of Company I commanded by Captain Jesse B. Browne. The *Journal* is edited by Louis Pelzer and printed in *The Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, Vol. VII, pp. 331–378.

[56] Report of Secretary of War Lewis Cass in *American State Papers, Military Affairs*, Vol. V, pp. 169–172.

[57] *American State Papers, Military Affairs*, Vol. V, p. 373.

[58] *Smithsonian Report*, 1885, Part II, p. 479.

[59] *A Journal of Marches by the First United States Dragoons* in *The Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, Vol. VII, p. 344.

[60] *American State Papers, Military Affairs*, Vol. V, p. 376.

[61] "Every morning early as the day dawned hundred[s] of Squaws might be seen ladened with corn Pumpions & water-mellons & Buffalo meat strolling through our camp more anxious to trade than our Yankee Pedlers — whatever ornaments or decorations we could offer whether Paints, Buttons, Ribbands or any thing else to make a show they quickly bartered. Horses of the finest form & appearance were willingly exchanged for a single blanket".— *A Journal of Marches by the First United States Dragoons* in *The Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, Vol. VII, p. 358.

[62] Catlin's *North American Indians*, Vol. II, p. 505.

"The little boy of whom I have spoken," wrote Catlin, "was brought in, the whole distance to Fort Gibson, in the arms of the dragoons, who took turns in carrying him; and after the command arrived there, he was transmitted to the Red River, by an officer, who had the enviable satisfaction of delivering him into the arms of his disconsolate and half-distracted mother."

[63] *A Journal of Marches by the First United States Dragoons* in *The Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, Vol. VII, pp. 358, 359.

[64] "Marched at half-past eight o'clock", writes Lieutenant Wheelock on July 31, 1834. "Men in fine spirits; abundance of buffalo meat; course northeast; distance 10 miles; encamped on a branch of the Canadian; three buffaloes killed this morning; no news yet from express; anxiously looked for; face of country rolling prairie; frequent deep gullies; one of the Kiowas killed three buffaloes with *three arrows.*"

[65] Catlin's *North American Indians*, Vol. II, p. 515.

[66] *A Journal of Marches by the First United States Dragoons* in *The Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, Vol. VII, p. 359.

[67] *American State Papers, Military Affairs*, Vol. V, p. 382.

[68] Dodge's *Military Order Book*, p. 90.

[69] Letter from Colonel Dodge, dated October 1, 1834, and found in the Historical Department at Des Moines.

[70] A report of this expedition was sent to the Adjutant General, and a copy thereof, dated August 18, 1834, is found in Dodge's *Military Order Book*, pp. 85–89.

[71] "Colonel Dodge, who led the expedition," said Lewis Cass, "and his whole command appear to have performed their duties in the most satisfactory manner, and they encountered with firmness the privations incident to the harassing service upon which they were ordered."—*American State Papers, Military Affairs*, Vol. V, p. 358.

[72] Catlin's *North American Indians*, Vol. II, p. 525.

CHAPTER V

[73] See the article entitled *Fort Des Moines (No. 1), Iowa* pre-

pared by the War Department and published in the *Annals of Iowa* (Third Series), Vol. III, pp. 351–363. In the history of Iowa there have been three posts which have borne the name "Fort Des Moines". To keep them distinct they are referred to as Fort Des Moines (No. 1), Fort Des Moines (No. 2), and Fort Des Moines (No. 3). For brief historical accounts of these three posts see Van der Zee's *Forts in the Iowa Country* in *The Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, Vol. XII, pp. 178–182, 192–197, 202–204.

"Three companies under Lieut. Col. Kearny marched from this place for the Demoin on the Mississippi on the 3d of this Instant where they are to be Wintered in the Sac Country".— Letter from Colonel Dodge to Major General Gaines dated Fort Gibson, September 7, 1834, and found in Dodge's *Military Order Book.*

[74] This journal is printed in *The Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, Vol. VII, pp. 361–364.

[75] *American State Papers, Public Lands*, Vol. III, p. 345; *Annals of Iowa* (First Series), Vol. V, p. 892, Vol. VI, p. 180, Vol. VII, pp. 230, 231.

[76] *Annals of Iowa* (Third Series), Vol. III, p. 353.

[77] Whitcomb's *Reminiscences of Gen. James C. Parrott* in the *Annals of Iowa* (Third Series), Vol. III, pp. 370, 371.

[78] This story is related in Hawkins Taylor's *General Jesse B. Brown[e]* in the *Annals of Iowa* (First Series), Vol. X, pp. 196–206.

[79] Quoted from Lea's *Early Explorations in Iowa* in the *Iowa Historical Record*, Vol. VI, No. 4, p. 543.

[80] *Annals of Iowa* (Third Series), Vol. III, pp. 353, 354.

[81] *Annals of Iowa* (Third Series), Vol. III, p. 355.

Lieutenant Lea's story of his journey to Fort Gibson and his return to Fort Des Moines may be found in the *Iowa Historical Record*, Vol. VI, No. 4, pp. 543–545.

[82] These instructions are printed in the *Annals of Iowa* (Third Series), Vol. III, p. 355.

[83] This journal is edited and published in *The Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, Vol. VII, pp. 364–378.

[84] These descriptions of scenery are based upon the following sources: Lea's *Notes on Wisconsin Territory;* Lea's *Early Explorations in Iowa* in the *Iowa Historical Record,* Vol. VI, pp. 535–553; the dragoon journal in *The Iowa Journal of History and Politics,* Vol. VII, pp. 364–378; and personal knowledge and observations.

[85] The detailed account in the text is based almost wholly upon this journal noted in footnote 83.

[86] *Iowa Historical Record,* Vol. VI, p. 549. Des Moines, the capital of Iowa, by the census of 1910 had a population of 86,368.

[87] The report of Colonel Kearny describing this site is printed in the *Annals of Iowa* (Third Series), Vol. III, pp. 356, 357.

[88] *Iowa Historical Record,* Vol. VI, p. 550.

[89] *Annals of Iowa* (Third Series), Vol. III, p. 370; *Annals of Iowa* (First Series), Vol. X, pp. 196–206.

[90] Lea's *Notes on Wisconsin Territory,* pp. 22, 23, 35.

"The rapids are about fourteen miles long, and at the top of them is a military post or cantonment, called Fort des Moines. This site appears to me to have been chosen with singularly bad judgment; it is low, unhealthy, and quite unimportant in a military point of view; moreover, if it had been placed at the lower, instead of the upper end of the rapids, an immense and useless expense would have been spared to the government, inasmuch as the freightage of every article conveyed thither is now doubled. The freight on board the steamer, from which I made these observations, was twenty-five cents per hundred weight from St. Louis to Keokuk, being one hundred and seventy miles, and from St. Louis to the fort, being only fourteen miles farther, it was fifty cents."—Murray's *Travels in North America,* Vol. II, p. 98.

[91] Quoted from Murray's *Travels in North America,* Vol. II, pp. 98, 99.

[92] *Annals of Iowa* (Third Series), Vol. III, pp. 370–373.

[93] *Annals of Iowa* (Third Series), Vol. III, pp. 357–359.

[94] Flagg's *The Far West,* Vol. I, p. 108.

[95] Flagg's *The Far West,* Vol. I, pp. 109, 110.

[96] *Annals of Iowa* (Third Series), Vol. III, pp. 358, 375.

[97] A more detailed account of the evacuation of this post is the War Department's article on *Fort Des Moines (No. 1), Iowa* in the *Annals of Iowa* (Third Series), Vol. III, pp. 351-363.

[98] *Annals of Iowa* (First Series), Vol. X, p. 147.

CHAPTER VI

[99] This chapter is based upon the material found in *American State Papers, Military Affairs*, Vol. VI, pp. 130-146. This material consists of the following documents:—

(a). The journal of the march of this detachment of the dragoons as written by Lieutenant G. P. Kingsbury, the journalist of the expedition.

(b). A map showing the route of the dragoons in this expedition.

(c). Letter from Colonel Dodge to Roger Jones, Adjutant General of the United States Army, dated October, 1835, from Fort Leavenworth.

(d). Letter of Edmund P. Gaines (of the Western Department of the Army) to Roger Jones, Adjutant General of the United States Army, dated November 12, 1835.

[100] The present counties of Richardson, Nemaha, Johnson, and Otoe.

[101] "The Otto village", describes Lieutenant Kingsbury, "is situated on a high prairie ridge, about two miles from the river, and overlooks the surrounding country for many miles. In front lay the green level valley of the Platte. . . . The village was very neat in its appearance. The lodges were built of wood, thatched with prairie grass, and covered with dirt. They were of a circular form, with a pointed roof about ten or twelve feet high to the break of the roof, and about fifteen or twenty feet high in the centre. They build their fires in the middle of the lodge, leaving an opening in the roof for the smoke to escape."

[102] The route of this march would seem to correspond approximately with the present line of the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad between the cities of Denver and Pueblo in the State of Colorado.

[103] "The command at this stage of the march", writes Lieuten-

ant Kingsbury on August 12th, "was in a most perfect state of health — not a man upon the sick report; the horses in fine order, nearly as good as when they left Fort Leavenworth. The Colonel had seen all the Indians he expected to see, and had established friendly relations with them all; had marched one thousand miles over a beautiful and interesting country, and we started for home with that joyous and self-satisfied feeling which resulted from a consciousness of having accomplished the full object of the expedition."

[104] "The weather being wet and foggy," runs the journal of August 20th, "we remained encamped; a party of men were sent out hunting, who killed two buffalo bulls; no buffalo cows were seen."

[105] This was a dragoon of Company A who died on August 11, 1835. Colonel Dodge directed him to be buried on a high prairie ridge and a stone to be placed at the head of the grave upon which were to be engraved his name and regiment.

CHAPTER VII

[106] Abel's *The History of Events Resulting in Indian Consolidation* in the *Annual Report of the American Historical Association, 1906*, Vol. I, pp. 342, 343; Paxson's *The Last American Frontier*, pp. 21–23.

[107] *American State Papers, Military Affairs*, Vol. VII, pp. 785, 786.

[108] *American State Papers, Military Affairs*, Vol. VII, maps opposite page 780.

[109] *American State Papers, Military Affairs*, Vol. VII, p. 598.

[110] This report by Secretary of War J. R. Poinsett is accompanied by documents from the engineer department, the quartermaster general, and the commissioner of Indian affairs, and may be found in *Senate Documents*, 2nd Session, 25th Congress, Vol. I, Doc. 65.

[111] Letter dated Fort Leavenworth, June 20, 1837, and printed in the *American State Papers, Military Affairs*, Vol. VII, pp. 960, 961.

[112] *Executive Documents*, 3rd Session, 25th Congress, Vol. I, Doc. 2, table D, p. 120.

[113] *Executive Documents*, 3rd Session, 25th Congress, Vol. I, Doc. 2, pp. 97, 98.

[114] Van der Zee's *Episodes in the Early History of the Western Iowa Country* in *The Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, Vol. XI, pp. 345, 346; Chittenden and Richardson's *Father De Smet's Life and Travels among the North American Indians*, Vol. I, pp. 158, 168.

[115] Report of Major General Alexander Macomb to the Secretary of War, dated November 29, 1838, and printed in *Executive Documents*, 3rd Session, 25th Congress, Vol. I, Doc. 2, pp. 114–119.

[116] Report of Acting Quartermaster General Henry Stanton in *Executive Documents*, 3rd Session, 25th Congress, Vol. I, Doc. 2, p. 123.

[117] *United States Statutes at Large*, Vol. V, p. 359.

[118] *Army and Navy Chronicle*, Vol. IX, No. 1, p. 10, July 4, 1839.

[119] Report of Quartermaster General Thomas S. Jesup dated November 29, 1839, and printed in *Executive Documents*, 1st Session, 26th Congress, Vol. I, Doc. 2, pp. 112–115.

[120] *Executive Documents*, 1st Session, 26th Congress, Vol. I, Doc. 2, pp. 56, 72, 73, 113, 114.

[121] *Executive Documents*, 1st Session, 26th Congress, Vol. I, Doc. 2, p. 56; Chittenden and Richardson's *Father De Smet's Life and Travels among the North American Indians*, Vol. I, p. 175.

[122] This account is based upon the report of a member of this expedition as printed in the *Army and Navy Chronicle*, Vol. IX, No. 18, pp. 285, 286, October 31, 1839.

[123] Report of Indian Agent Jos. V. Hamilton, dated October 18, 1839, and of Moses Merrill (government teacher), dated September 12, 1839, printed in *Executive Documents*, 1st Session, 26th Congress, Vol. I, Doc. 2, pp. 503, 504, 522; see also the Indian census returns in *Executive Documents*, 2nd Session, 26th Congress, Vol. I, Doc. 2, p. 319.

[124] *Statistical Atlas* (Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900), Plate No. 7.

[125] *Executive Documents*, 2nd Session, 26th Congress, Vol. I, Doc. 2, pp. 46, 47.

[126] From an account signed by "Forester" and printed in the *Army and Navy Chronicle*, Vol. XI, No. 16, p. 249, October 15, 1840.

[127] *Niles' Register*, Vol. VII (or Vol. LVII—Fifth series), p. 416, February 22, 1840. These two sites were in the present county of Sequoyah in the State of Oklahoma.

[128] *Army and Navy Chronicle*, Vol. XI, No. 16, p. 249, October 15, 1840.

[129] *United States Statutes at Large*, Vol. V, p. 404.

[130] *Army and Navy Chronicle*, Vol. IX, No. 5, p. 80, August 1, 1839.

[131] *Army and Navy Chronicle*, Vol. X, No. 16, April 16, 1840.

[132] *Executive Documents*, 2nd Session, 26th Congress, Vol. I, Doc. 2, pp. 317, 321.

CHAPTER VIII

[133] In the preparation of this chapter Van der Zee's *Forts in the Iowa Country* in *The Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, Vol. XII, pp. 163–204, has been found of special help and value.

[134] Kappler's *Indian Affairs, Laws and Treaties*, Vol. II, pp. 305–310, 345–348, 498–500. See also *Annals of Iowa* (Third Series), Vol. IV, pp. 448, 449.

[135] *Annals of Iowa* (Third Series), Vol. IV, pp. 449, 451; and *Senate Documents*, 3rd Session, 27th Congress, Vol. I, Doc. 1, p. 231. The site of the post was on the present location of the village of Fort Atkinson in Winneshiek County, Iowa. It was abandoned in 1849.

[136] Reports of Governor John Chambers and Sub-Agent David Lowry for the year 1842 in *Senate Documents*, 3rd Session, 27th Congress, Vol. I, Doc. 1, pp. 417, 423.

[137] *Annals of Iowa* (First Series), Vol. III, pp. 411, 414, 535.

[138] *Annals of Iowa* (Third Series), Vol. IV, pp. 291, 293, 451. The Sac and Fox Agency was located on the left bank of the Des Moines River in the present county of Wapello, Iowa.

[139] Report of Agent John Beach, dated September 1, 1842, and printed in *Senate Documents*, 3rd Session, 27th Congress, Vol. I, Doc. 1, pp. 424–427.

[140] *Niles' Register*, Vol. LXI, p. 101, October 16, 1841; *Annals of Iowa* (First Series), Vol. VIII, p. 103.

[141] A detailed account of this treaty may be found in Parish's *John Chambers*, Chapter XIV. A picturesque account is also given in the *Iowa Territorial Gazette and Advertiser* (Burlington), Vol. VI, No. 14, October 15, 1842. This account is reprinted in *The Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, Vol. X, pp. 261–265.

[142] This description of life at the agency is gleaned from the *Annals of Iowa* (First Series), Vol. XII, pp. 94–97; and the *Annals of Iowa* (Third Series), Vol. IV, pp. 291, 292.

[143] *Senate Documents*, 3rd Session, 27th Congress, Vol. I, Doc. 1, p. 199, Table C.

[144] *Annals of Iowa* (Third Series), Vol. III, p. 471. A map in Vol. XI of *Explorations and Surveys for a Railroad Route to the Pacific Ocean* places "Old Ft. Croghan" some distance above the present Council Bluffs and a little below the mouth of the Boyer River. The encampment was abandoned in September, 1843.

[145] *Audubon and his Journals*, edited by his daughter Maria R. Audubon and Elliott Coues, Vol. I, pp. 477–482.

[146] *Audubon and his Journals*, Vol. I, pp. 478–482.

[147] A detailed account of how the "Omega's" crew prevented the liquor from being discovered by the dragoon officers is related in Chittenden's *The History of the American Fur Trade of the Far West*, Vol. II, pp. 679–683.

[148] Most of the details concerning this fort are drawn from the article entitled *Fort Des Moines*, No. 2, in the *Annals of Iowa* (Third Series), Vol. IV, pp. 161–178.

[149] From material reprinted from the *Keosauqua Times* in the *Davenport Gazette*, Vol. V, No. 12, November 13, 1845.

[150] Report of Agent John Beach dated September 1, 1846, and printed in *Executive Documents*, 2nd Session, 29th Congress, Vol. I, Doc. 4, pp. 296–300.

CHAPTER IX

[151] The account of Captain Boone's exploration is based upon his

Journal which gives a daily and detailed story of the march. The text of this *Journal* with an introduction and accompanying documents is printed in the appendix to this volume.

These documents are all in the office of the Adjutant General at Washington, D. C., photostat prints, secured by The State Historical Society of Iowa, being used in the preparation of the text.

[152] Josiah Gregg, in the preparation of his *Commerce of the Prairies*, the classic account of the Santa Fé trade, had access to Captain Boone's *Journal*. Quotations from it describing the "Rock Salt" may be found in Vol. II, pp. 187–189, of Gregg's work.

[153] Captain Boone's record for July 4, 1843, reads: "Marched 4 miles E. S. E. and encamped on a pretty grove of Elm, hackberry, ... with good grass and water — and buffalo in sight, concluded to spend the 4th and rest the teams which are nearly worn out. The country sandy, with a few sand hills. Spent the Fourth in roasting fine Buffalo meat.— Cured some."

[154] This account is based upon Cooke's *Scenes and Adventures in the Army*, pp. 236–282.

[155] Gregg's *Commerce of the Prairies*, Vol. I, pp. 30, 31.

[156] Gregg's *Commerce of the Prairies*, Vol. I, pp. 44–49.

[157] This was located a little north of the present town of Diamond Spring in Morris County, Kansas.

[158] This point was about twenty miles above the present Dodge City in Morris County, Kansas, and was about midway between Independence and Santa Fé.

CHAPTER X

[159] The source material for this chapter is found in *Executive Documents*, 1st Session, 29th Congress, Vol. VI, Doc. 168. The material consists of the following documents: a letter of transmittal from the Adjutant General to the Secretary of War, Captain Allen's report to Colonel Kearny describing in general the route, and Captain Allen's *Journal* containing the detailed narrative of the expedition.

These documents have been edited with an introduction and critical notes by Jacob Van der Zee and published in *The Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, Vol. XI, pp. 68–108.

[160] Medium and Swan lakes are in Emmet County, Iowa; while Turtle Lake is on the boundary between Iowa and Minnesota.

[161] See Nicollet's report printed in *Executive Documents*, 2nd Session, 28th Congress, Vol. II, Doc. 52. The reference is to page 13.

[162] The route to the Raccoon River seems to have crossed the following Iowa counties: Woodbury, Ida, Calhoun, and Jefferson.

[163] Government records contain brief mention only of the following additional operations of the dragoons in the year 1844: (1) an expedition of five companies commanded by Captain Wharton, (2) Captain Sumner's march from Fort Atkinson to the region north of the Minnesota River; (3) the tour of one company under Captain Boone from Fort Gibson to a point on the Red River; and (4) the march of one company from Arkansas River to Fort Towson.— See Report of Major General Winfield Scott dated November 23, 1844, and printed in *Executive Documents*, 2nd Session, 28th Congress, Vol. I, Doc. 2, pp. 129–132.

CHAPTER XI

[164] *Senate Documents*, 1st Session, 29th Congress, Vol. I, Doc. 1, table D, *et passim*.

[165] This account is based on Captain Sumner's report which is printed in *Senate Documents*, Vol. I, Doc. 1, pp. 217–220. This material is edited with introduction and notes by Jacob Van der Zee in *The Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, Vol. XI, pp. 258–267.

[166] Located between Nicollet and Blue Earth counties in Minnesota.

[167] *Senate Documents*, 1st Session, 29th Congress, Vol. I, Doc. 1, pp. 563, 564.

[168] This was a widening of the Minnesota River and borders on Lac qui Parle County in Minnesota.

[169] Between Big Stone County, Minnesota, and Roberts County, South Dakota.

[170] Located between Ramsey and Benson counties in North Dakota.

[171] Report of Agent Amos J. Bruce, dated September 1, 1844, and printed in *Executive Documents*, 2nd Session, 28th Congress, Vol. I, Doc. 2, pp. 418, 419.

CHAPTER XII

[172] The narrative and description of this chapter are based upon the following sources:

(a). *Senate Documents*, 1st Session, 29th Congress, Vol. I, Doc. 1, pp. 208–217. This contains General Winfield Scott's report, Colonel Kearny's report of the summer campaign of 1845, a brief abstract of journals of the expedition kept by Lieutenants Turner and Franklin, and a map furnished by the latter officer which gives a clear and detailed itinerary of the outward and return trails.

(b). Cooke's *Scenes and Adventures in the Army*, pp. 282–432. This account by a participant is full of interesting incidents and details. The scenic descriptions are animated and vivid, but sometimes stilted in style.

(c). Thwaites's *Early Western Travels*, Vol. XXX. This contains a reprint of Joel Palmer's *Journal of Travels over the Rocky Mountains.* Palmer was one of the leaders of an emigrant party which travelled over the Oregon Trail during the same months that the dragoons were on the march. His account is, therefore, a contemporary one and is valuable for vivid descriptions of emigrant parties and scenes along the route.

(d). Parkman's *The Oregon Trail.* Mr. Parkman travelled over the trail as far as Fort Laramie in 1846. His descriptions of emigrants, Indians, scenery, hardships, and animal life make the work a valuable, near-contemporary source, as well as a charming, readable narrative.

(e). *Ein Ausflug nach den Felsen-Gebirgen im Jahre 1839*, translated and edited by Frederick A. Wislizenus and published by the Missouri Historical Society. This is an autobiographical account by Dr. Adolph Wislizenus who travelled over the trail.

(f). The report of Lieutenant Frémont's expedition over the trail in 1842. This account found in many editions is very valuable for its descriptions of life, scenery, and climate along the route.

(g). *Niles' Register*, Vol. LXIX, pp. 123, 124, and pp. 302, 303. These pages contain respectively a brief condensed account of Colonel Kearny's march by Captain Cooke and a reprint of the documents mentioned in the first source above.

(h). *A Topographical Map of the Road from Missouri to Oregon*, in seven sections. This map was prepared from the journals and field notes of Frémont and presents a detailed view of the Oregon Trail. Its meteorological observations, location of Indians, and the remarks upon the animal life and vegetation along the route make this map of the highest use and value in studying the trail.

(i). Edwin Bryant's *What I Saw in California*. This author's descriptions of his journey over the trail in 1846 furnish additional view-points on the famous transcontinental road.

(j). In the *Life, Letters and Travels of Father Pierre-Jean De Smet*, Vol. I, edited by Chittenden and Richardson, appears De Smet's description of the trail as he saw it in 1841.

(k). In Chittenden's *The History of the American Fur Trade of the Far West*, Vol. I, Chapter XXVI, the itinerary of the trail is given, with the distances between the various stations along the route.

[173] The South Pass was simply a high ridge between the ends of the Sweetwater and Wind River Mountains and was located in the southern part of what is now Frémont County, Wyoming. The ascent to it is so gradual that it is not easy to determine just when the summit is reached. It had nothing of the gorge-like character of such passes as St. Bernard or Simplon in Europe or the Allegheny passes in America.

[174] These statistics are given by Colonel Kearny in his report of the expedition to R. Jones, the Adjutant General of the United States Army.

CHAPTER XIII

[175] For this chapter the leading sources are again Cooke's *Scenes and Adventures in the Army; Niles' Register*, Vol. LXIX, pp. 123, 124; and *Senate Documents*, 1st Session, 29th Congress, Vol. I, Doc. 1, pp. 208–217.

[176] Crow Creek is in Weld County in the present State of Colorado which the regiment entered on July 18, 1845. On the evening of July 22nd the encampment was near the site of the present city of Denver.

[177] Descriptive features are taken largely from Thomas J. Farnham's *Travels* as reprinted in Thwaites's *Early Western Travels*, Vol. XXVIII.

[178] On this date the command entered Hamilton County, Kansas.

CHAPTER XIV

[179] The following authorities are the basis for this chapter:

(a). John T. Hughes's *Doniphan's Expedition,* Chapters I–V. The author was a private in Company C of the mounted volunteers from Clay County, Missouri. This is a detailed account of the march from day to day written by a competent hand and published in 1848. This account has been edited with notes by William E. Connelley, who has also printed the official rosters of the eleven volunteer companies.

(b). Frank S. Edwards's *A Campaign in New Mexico.* The author was a private in a company of Missouri artillery and gives concrete details of the march to Santa Fé.

(c). Lieutenant W. H. Emory's *Notes of a Military Reconnoissance.* The author was attached to the "Army of the West" as a topographical engineer and from August 2–18, 1846, gives a daily account of the march. Emory's unofficial diary of the march from August 2nd to September 5th is printed in *Niles' Register,* Vol. LXXI, pp. 138–140, 157–159, 174, 175.

A map in Lieutenant Emory's *Notes* gives a detailed topographical view of the route from Fort Leavenworth to Santa Fé and also of General Kearny's march from that point to San Diego.

(d). Lieutenant J. W. Abert's *Notes* published as an appendix to Emory's *Notes* presents the climatic, topographical, and botanical features along the route pursued by the "Army of the West".

(e). The journal of an anonymous officer from August 13 to 23, 1846, is printed in *Niles' Register,* Vol. LXXI, pp. 90–92.

[180] Parkman's *The Oregon Trail,* pp. 377, 378 (New Library Edition).

CHAPTER XV

[181] Emory's *Notes of a Military Reconnoissance* gives a detailed story of the march from Santa Fé to San Diego. Captain Johnston's *Journal* is a daily record from September 25 to December 4, 1846, and is printed in *House Executive Documents,* 1st Session, 30th Congress, Doc. 41, pp. 567–614. General Kearny's reports of this expedition are printed in *Senate Documents,* 1st Session, 30th Congress, Vol. I, Doc. 1, pp. 513–517, and the same are reprinted in *Niles' Register,* Vol. LXXII, pp. 170, 171. The brief report by Major Swords is in *House Executive Documents,* 2nd Session, 30th Congress,

Vol. I, Doc. 1, pp. 226–228. Good secondary accounts are to be found in Sabin's *Kit Carson Days*; Brackett's *History of the United States Cavalry*, pp. 69–77; and Bancroft's *History of California*, Vol. V, Chs. XIII and XV. In the latter are contained elaborate lists of references which refer to minute and detailed phases of this campaign and to the subsequent disputes between the commanders.

[182] Captain Johnston's journal ends with December 4, 1846, just two days before his death.

[183] A great amount of controversy arose out of this battle for which General Kearny was severely censured. The subsequent disputes between Kearny, Frémont, and Stockton were presented by Senator Benton who plead the cause of Frémont, then his son-in-law. This speech of sixty pages given in the Senate is in the *Congressional Globe*, 1st Session, 30th Congress, Appendix, pp. 977–1040.

[184] Richman's *California Under Spain and Mexico, 1535–1847*, pp. 325–327.

CHAPTER XVI

[185] *Executive Documents*, 1st Session, 31st Congress, Vol. VIII, Doc. 51. This document upon which the text is mainly based consists of the following material:

(a). Adjutant General R. Jones's instructions, dated April 18, 1849.

(b). Reports from the Indian agents at St. Peter's and Long Prairie in 1848 and 1849.

(c). Major Woods's twenty-eight page report, dated Fort Snelling, November 10, 1849.

(d). Two letters from G. A. Belcourt, describing the half-breeds and dated November 25, 1845, and August 20, 1849.

(e). Two letters from Captain John Pope, dated October 1 and 3, 1849.

(f). Captain Pope's map of the route pursued by the expedition.

[186] Approximately on the present site of Sauk Rapids in Benton County, Minnesota.

[187] Across the present Stearns County in Minnesota.

[188] Whipple Lake or Reno Lake in Pope County, Minnesota.

[189] Likely the present Pomme de Terre Lake in Grant County.

[190] Near Wahpeton in Richlands County, North Dakota.

[191] The command travelled over the counties of Grand Forks, Walsh, and Pembina in North Dakota.

[192] *Collections of the State Historical Society of North Dakota*, Vol. I, pp. 384–405.

[193] Marble's *To Red River and Beyond* in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, Vol. XXI, pp. 581–606 at 584, 585.

CHAPTER XVII

[194] From the *Post Records of Fort Leavenworth* in the Administration Building, dated May 28, 1846, July 13, 1848, and November 6 and 10, 1849.

[195] *Post Records of Fort Leavenworth*, May 14, 1849.

[196] *Post Records of Fort Leavenworth;* Captain Chas. S. Lovell to Major D. C. Buell, July 30, 1850.

[197] *Post Records of Fort Leavenworth*, January 26, 1850.

[198] *Post Records of Fort Leavenworth;* Lieutenant Colonel E. V. Sumner to Major D. C. Buell, January 30, 1851.

[199] *Post Records of Fort Leavenworth*, May 16, 22, 1846.

[200] *Post Records of Fort Leavenworth;* Colonel Sumner to Major General R. Jones, July 12, 1851.

[201] Quoted in Crothers's *Humanly Speaking*, p. 60.

[202] Lowe's *Five Years a Dragoon*, pp. 24, 25, 45, 46.

[203] *Post Records of Fort Leavenworth*, January 19, May 25, June 7, July 8, 1849.

[204] *Post Records of Fort Leavenworth*, May 12, 1850.

[205] Lowe's *Five Years a Dragoon*, pp. 20–22.

[206] Quoted from Lowe's *Five Years a Dragoon*, p. 22.

[207] Lowe's *Five Years a Dragoon*, p. 28.

[208] Lowe's *Five Years a Dragoon*, pp. 24, 26.

[209] Quoted from Lowe's *Five Years a Dragoon*, pp. 31, 32.

APPENDIX

[210] This episode is described in Gregg's *Commerce of the Prairies*, Vol. II, pp. 166–168.

[211] Located near the present site of the village of Choteau in Mayes County in Oklahoma.

[212] Manuel Armijo was governor of New Mexico (except during a brief interval) from 1838 to the American occupation in 1846.

[213] See note 152 in Chapter IX.

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